45

THE REVELLERS.

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P. McIan. J. Pizzetta

The Glee Maidens.

WAVERLEY GALLERY. FAIR MAID OF PERTH.

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THE WORKS OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT

The Fair Maid of Perth

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CHAPTER XVIII.

"A purple land, where law secures not life."

BYRON.

THE morning of Ash Wednesday arose pale and bleak, as usual at this season in Scotland, where the worst and most inclement weather often occurs in the early spring months. It was a severe day of frost, and the citizens had to sleep away the consequences of the preceding holiday's debauchery. The sun had therefore risen for an hour above the horizon, before there was any general appearance of life among the inhabitants of Perth, so that it was some time after daybreak, when a citizen, going early to mass, saw the body of the luckless Oliver Proudfute lying on its face, across the kennel, in the manner in which he had fallen, under the blow, as our readers will easily imagine, of Antony Bonthron, the "boy of the belt," that is, the executioner of the pleasure, of John of Ramorny.

This early citizen was Allan Griffin, so termed because he was master of the Griffin inn; and the alarm which he raised soon brought together, first straggling neighbours, and by-and-bye a concourse of citizens. At first, from the circumstance of the well-known buff-coat, and the crimson feather in the head-piece, the noise arose that it was the stout Smith that lay there slain. This false rumour continued for some time; for the host of the Griffin, who himself had been a magistrate, would not permit the body to be touched or stirred till Bailie Craigdallie arrived, so that the face was not seen.

"This concerns the Fair City, my friends," he said; "and if it is the stout Smith of the Wynd who lies here, the man lives not in Perth, who will not risk land and life to avenge him. Look you, the villains

have struck him down behind his back, for there is not a man within ten Scotch miles of Perth, gentle or semple, Highland or Lowland, that would have met him face to face with such evil purpose. Oh, brave men of Perth! the flower of your manhood has been cut down, and that by a base and treacherous hand!"

A wild cry of fury arose from the people, who were fast assembling.

"We will take him on our shoulders," said a strong butcher; "we will carry him to the King's presence at the Dominican Convent."

"Ay, ay," answered a blacksmith, "neither bolt nor bar shall keep us from the King; neither monk nor mass shall break our purpose. A better armourer never laid hammer on anvil!"

"To the Dominicans! to the Dominicans!" shouted the assembled people.

"Bethink you, burghers," said another citizen, "our King is a good King, and loves us like his children. It is the Douglas and the Duke of Albany that will not let good King Robert hear the distresses of his people."

"Are we to be slain in our own streets for the King's softness of heart?" said the butcher. "The Bruce did otherwise. If the King will not keep us, we will keep ourselves. Ring the bells backward, every bell of them that is made of metal. Cry, and spare not, St. Johnston's hunt is up!" *

"Ay," cried another citizen, "and let us to the holds of Albany and the Douglas, and burn them to the ground. Let the fires tell far and near, that Perth knew how to avenge her stout Henry Gow! He has fought a score of times for the Fair City's right—let us show we can fight once to avenge his wrong. Hallo! ho! brave citizens, St. Johnston's hunt is up!"

This cry, the well-known rallying word amongst the inhabitants of Perth, and seldom heard but on occasions of general uproar, was echoed from voice to voice; and one or two neighbouring steeples, of which the enraged citizens possessed themselves, either by consent of the priests, or in spite of their opposition, began to ring out the ominous alarm notes, in which, as the ordinary succession of the chimes were reversed, the bells were said to be rung backward.

Still, as the crowd thickened, and the roar waxed more universal and louder, Allan Griffin, a burly man, with a deep voice, and well respected among high and low, kept his station as he bestrode the corpse, and called loudly to the multitude to keep back, and wait the arrival of the magistrates.

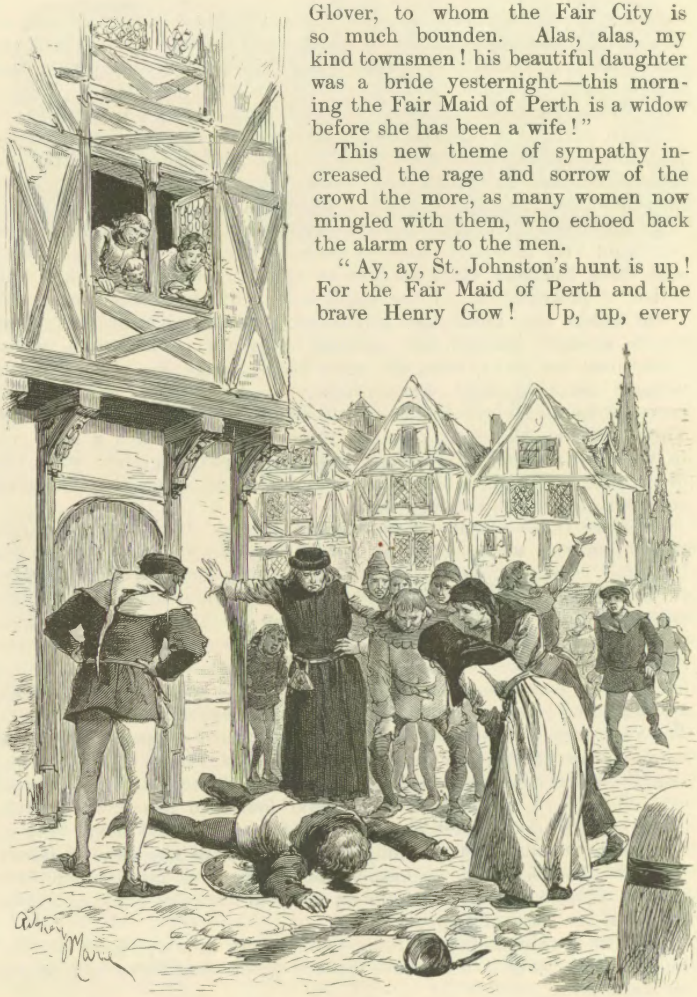
"We must proceed by order in this matter, my masters; we must have our magistrates at our head. They are duly chosen and elected in our town-hall, good men and true every one; we will not be called rioters, or idle perturbators of the king's peace. Stand you still, and make room, for yonder comes Bailie Craigdallie, ay, and honest Simon

* Note IX. St. Johnston's Hunt is up.

Glover, to whom the Fair City is so much bounden. Alas, alas, my kind townsmen! his beautiful daughter was a bride yesternight—this morning the Fair Maid of Perth is a widow before she has been a wife!"

This new theme of sympathy increased the rage and sorrow of the crowd the more, as many women now mingled with them, who echoed back the alarm cry to the men.

"Ay, ay, St. Johnston's hunt is up! For the Fair Maid of Perth and the brave Henry Gow! Up, up, every



The assassination of Oliver Proudfute.

one of you, spare not for skin-cutting! To the stables!—to the

stables!—when the horse is gone the man-at-arms is useless—cut off the grooms and yeomen; lame, maim, and stab the horses; kill the base squires and pages. Let these proud knights meet us on their feet if they dare!"

"They dare not, they dare not," answered the men; "their strength is in their horses and armour; and yet the haughty and ungrateful villains have slain a man whose skill as an armourer was never matched in Milan or Venice. To arms! to arms, brave burghers! St. Johnston's hunt is up!"

Amid this clamour, the magistrates and superior class of inhabitants with difficulty obtained room to examine the body, having with them the town clerk, to take an official protocol, or, as it is still called, a precognition, of the condition in which it was found. To these delays the multitude submitted, with a patience and order which strongly marked the national character of a people, whose resentment has always been the more deeply dangerous, that they will, without relaxing their determination of vengeance, submit with patience to all delays which are necessary to ensure its attainment. The multitude, therefore, received their magistrates with a loud cry, in which the thirst of revenge was announced, together with the deferential welcome to the patrons by whose direction they expected to obtain it in right and legal fashion.

While these accents of welcome still rung above the crowd, who now filled the whole adjacent streets, receiving and circulating a thousand varying reports, the fathers of the city caused the body to be raised and more closely examined; when it was instantly perceived, and the truth publicly announced, that not the armourer of the Wynd, so highly, and according to the esteemed qualities of the time, so justly popular among his fellow-citizens; but a man of far less general estimation, though not without his own value in society, lay murdered before them—the brisk bonnet-maker, Oliver Proudfute. The resentment of the people had so much turned upon the general opinion, that their frank and brave champion, Henry Gow, was the slaughtered person, that the contradiction of the report served to cool the general fury, although, if poor Oliver had been recognized at first, there is little doubt that the cry of vengeance would have been as unanimous, though not probably so furious, as in the case of Henry Wynd.* The first circulation of the unexpected intelligence even excited a smile among the crowd, so near are the confines of the ludicrous to those of the terrible.

"The murderers have without doubt taken him for Henry Smith," said Griffin, "which must have been a great comfort to him in the circumstances."

But the arrival of other persons on the scene soon restored its deeply tragic character.

* Note X. Henry Smith or Wynd.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablos, ho!
The town will rise——"

Othello, Act II., Scene 3.

THE wild rumours which flew through the town, speedily followed by the tolling of the alarm bells, spread general consternation. The nobles and knights, with their followers, gathered in different places of rendezvous, where a defence could best be maintained; and the alarm reached the royal residence, where the young Prince was one of the first to appear to assist, if necessary, in the defence of the old King. The scene of the preceding night ran in his recollection; and, remembering the blood-stained figure of Bonthron, he conceived, though indistinctly, that the ruffian's action had been connected with this uproar. The subsequent and more interesting discourse with Sir John Ramorny had, however, been of such an impressive nature, as to obliterate all traces of what he had vaguely heard of the bloody act of the assassin, excepting a confused recollection that some one or other had been slain. It was chiefly on his father's account that he had assumed arms with his household train, who, clad in bright armour, and bearing lances in their hands, made now a figure very different from that of the preceding night, when they appeared as intoxicated Bacchanalians. The kind old monarch received this mark of filial attachment with tears of gratitude, and proudly presented his son to his brother Albany, who entered shortly afterwards. He took them each by the hand.

"Now are we three Stewarts," he said, "as inseparable as the holy Trefoil; and, as they say the wearer of that sacred herb mocks at

magical delusion, so we, while we are true to each other, may set malice and enmity at defiance."

The brother and son kissed the kind hand which pressed theirs, while Robert III. expressed his confidence in their affection. The kiss of the youth was, for the time, sincere; that of the brother was the salute of the apostate Judas.

In the meantime the bell of Saint John's church alarmed, amongst others, the inhabitants of Curfew Street. In the house of Simon Glover, old Dorothy Glover, as she was called, (for she also took name from the trade she practised, under her master's auspices,) was the first to catch the sound. Though somewhat deaf upon ordinary occasions, her ear for bad news was as sharp as a kite's scent for carrion; for Dorothy, otherwise an industrious, faithful, and even affectionate creature, had that strong appetite for collecting and retailing sinister intelligence which is often to be marked in the lower classes. Little accustomed to be listened to, they love the attention which a tragic tale ensures to the bearer, and enjoy, perhaps, the temporary equality to which misfortune reduces those who are ordinarily accounted their superiors. Dorothy had no sooner possessed herself of a slight packet of the rumours which were flying abroad, than she bounced into her master's bedroom, who had taken the privilege of age and the holytide to sleep longer than usual.

"There he lies, honest man!" said Dorothy, half in a screeching, and half in a wailing tone of sympathy,—"There he lies; his best friend slain, and he knowing as little about it as the babe new born, that kens not life from death."

"How now!" said the Glover, starting up out of his bed,—"What is the matter, old woman? is my daughter well?"

"Old woman!" said Dorothy, who, having her fish hooked, chose to let him play a little. "I am not so old," said she, flouncing out of the room, "as to bide in the place till a man rises from his naked bed——"

And presently she was heard at a distance in the parlour beneath, melodiously singing to the scrubbing of her own broom.

"Dorothy—screechowl—devil,—say but my daughter is well!"

"I *am* well, my father," answered the Fair Maid of Perth, speaking from her bedroom, "perfectly well; but what, for Our Lady's sake, is the matter? The bells ring backward, and there is shrieking and crying in the streets."

"I will presently know the cause. Here, Conachar, come speedily and tie my points. I forgot—the Highland loon is far beyond Fortingall. Patience, daughter, I will presently bring you news."

"Ye need not hurry yourself for that, Simon Glover," quoth the obdurate old woman; "the best and the worst of it may be tauld before you could hobble over your door-stane. I ken the haill story abroad; for, thought I, our goodman is so wilful, that he'll be for

banging out to the tuilzie, be the cause what it like; and sae I maun e'en stir my shanks, and learn the cause of all this, or he will hae his auld nose in the midst of it, and maybe get it nipt off before he knows what for."

"And what *is* the news, then, old woman?" said the impatient Glover, still busying himself with the hundred points or latchets which were the means of attaching the doublet to the hose.

Dorothy suffered him to proceed in his task, till she conjectured it must be nearly accomplished; and foresaw that, if she told not the secret herself, her master would be abroad to seek in person for the

"'Dead!' repeated Catharine" (p. 234).

cause of the disturbance. She, therefore, hallooed out—"Aweel, aweel, ye canna say it is my fault, if you hear ill news before you have been at the morning mass. I would have kept it from ye till ye had heard the priest's word; but since you must hear it, you have e'en lost the truest friend that ever gave hand to another, and Perth maun mourn for the bravest burgher that ever took a blade in hand!"

"Harry Smith! Harry Smith!" exclaimed the father and the daughter at once.

"Oh, ay, there ye hae it at last," said Dorothy; "and whase fault was it but your ain?—ye made such a piece of work about his companying with a glee-woman, as if he had companied with a Jewess!"

Dorothy would have gone on long enough, but her master exclaimed to his daughter, who was still in her own apartment, "It is nonsense, Catharine—all the dotage of an old fool. No such thing has happened. I will bring you the true tidings in a moment;" and snatching up his staff, the old man hurried out past Dorothy, and into the street, where the throng of people were rushing towards the High Street. Dorothy, in the meantime, kept muttering to herself, "Thy father is a wise man, take his ain word for it. He will come next by some scathe in the hobbleshow, and then it will be, Dorothy, get the lint, and, Dorothy, spread the plaster; but now it is nothing but nonsense, and a lie, and impossibility, that can come out of Dorothy's mouth—Impossible! Does auld Simon think that Harry Smith's head was as hard as his stithy, and a haill clan of Highlandmen dinging at him?"

Here she was interrupted by a figure like an angel, who came wandering by her with wild eye, cheek deadly pale, hair dishevelled, and an apparent want of consciousness, which terrified the old woman out of her discontented humour.

"Our Lady bless my bairn!" said she. "What look you sae wild for?"

"Did you not say some one was dead?" said Catharine, with a frightful uncertainty of utterance, as if her organs of speech and hearing served her but imperfectly.

"Dead, hinny! Ay, ay, deed eneugh; ye'll no hae him to gloom at ony mair."

"Dead!" repeated Catharine, still with the same uncertainty of voice and manner. "Dead—slain—and by Highlanders?"

"I'se warrant by Highlanders,—the lawless loons. Wha is it else that kills maist of the folks about, unless now and than when the burghers take a tirrivie, and kill ane another, or whiles that the knights and nobles shed blood? But I'se uphauld it's been the Highlandmen this bout. The man was no in Perth, laird or loon, durst have faced Henry Smith man to man. There's been sair odds against him; ye'll see that when it's looked into."

"Highlanders!" repeated Catharine, as if haunted by some idea which troubled her senses. "Highlanders!—Oh, Conachar! Conachar!"

"Indeed, and I daresay you have lighted on the very man, Catharine. They quarrelled, as you saw, on the St. Valentine's Even, and had a warstle. A Highlandman has a long memory for the like of that. Gie him a cuff at Martinmas, and his cheek will be tingling at Whitsunday. But what could have brought down the lang-legged loons to do their bloody wark within burgh?"

"Woe's me, it was I," said Catharine; "it was I brought the Highlanders down—I that sent for Conachar—ay, they have lain in wait—but it was I that brought them within reach of their prey. But

I will see with my own eyes—and then—something we will do. Say to my father I will be back anon."

"Are ye distraught, lassie?" shouted Dorothy, as Catharine made past her towards the street door. "You would not gang into the street with the hair hanging down your haffets in that guise, and you kenn'd for the Fair Maid of Perth? Mass, but she's out in the street, come o't what like, and the auld Glover will be as mad as if I could withhold her, will she nill she, flyte she fling she. This is a brave morning for an Ash Wednesday!—What's to be done? If I were to seek my master among the multitude, I were like to be crushed beneath their feet, and little moan made for the old woman—And am I to run after Catharine, who ere this is out of sight, and far lighter of foot than I am?—so I will just down the gate to Nicol Barber's, and tell him a' about it."

While the trusty Dorothy was putting her prudent resolve into execution, Catharine ran through the streets of Perth in a manner, which at another moment would have brought on her the attention of every one, who saw her hurrying on with a reckless impetuosity, wildly and widely different from the ordinary decency and composure of her step and manner, and without the plaid, scarf, or mantle, which "women of good," of fair character and decent rank, universally carried around them, when they went abroad. But distracted as the people were, every one inquiring or telling the cause of the tumult, and most recounting it different ways, the neligence of her dress, and discomposure of her manner, made no impression on any one; and she was suffered to press forward on the path she had chosen, without attracting more notice than the other females, who, stirred by anxious curiosity or fear, had come out to inquire the cause of an alarm so general—it might be to seek for friends, for whose safety they were interested.

As Catharine passed along, she felt all the wild influence of the agitating scene, and it was with difficulty she forbore from repeating the cries of lamentation and alarm, which were echoed around her. In the meantime, she rushed rapidly on, embarrassed like one in a dream, with a strange sense of dreadful calamity, the precise nature of which she was unable to define, but which implied the terrible consciousness, that the man who loved her so fondly, whose good qualities she so highly esteemed, and whom she now felt to be dearer than perhaps she would before have acknowledged to her own bosom, was murdered, and most probably by her means. The connection betwixt Henry's supposed death, and the descent of Conachar and his followers, though adopted by her in a moment of extreme and engrossing emotion, was sufficiently probable to have been received for truth, even if her understanding had been at leisure to examine its credibility. Without knowing what she sought, except the general desire to know the worst of the dreadful report, she hurried forward to the very spot, which of all others her feelings of the preceding day would have induced her to avoid.

Who would, upon the evening of Shrove-tide, have persuaded the proud, the timid, the shy, the rigidly decorous Catharine Glover, that before mass on Ash Wednesday she should rush through the streets of Perth, making her way amidst tumult and confusion, with her hair unbound, and her dress disarranged, to seek the house of that same lover, who, she had reason to believe, had so grossly and indelicately neglected and affronted her, as to pursue a low and licentious amour! Yet so it was; and her eagerness taking, as if by instinct, the road which was most free, she avoided the High Street, where the pressure was greatest, and reached the wynd by the narrow lanes on the northern skirt of the town, through which Henry Smith had formerly escorted Louise. But even these comparatively lonely passages were now astir with passengers, so general was the alarm. Catharine Glover made her way through them, however, while such as observed her looked on each other, and shook their heads in sympathy with her distress. At length, without any distinct idea of her own purpose, she stood before her lover's door, and knocked for admittance.

The silence which succeeded the echoing of her hasty summons increased the alarm, which had induced her to take this desperate measure.

"Open,—open, Henry!" she cried. "Open, if you yet live!—Open, if you would not find Catharine Glover dead upon your threshold!"

As she cried thus franticly, to ears which she was taught to believe were stopped by death, the lover she invoked opened the door in person, just in time to prevent her sinking on the ground. The extremity of his ecstatic joy upon an occasion so unexpected, was qualified only by the wonder which forbade him to believe it real, and by his alarm at the closed eyes, half-opened and blanched lips, total absence of complexion, and apparently total cessation of breathing.

Henry had remained at home, in spite of the general alarm, which had reached his ears for a considerable time, fully determined to put himself in the way of no brawls that he could avoid; and it was only in compliance with a summons from the Magistrates, which, as a burgher, he was bound to obey, that, taking his sword and a spare buckler from the wall, he was about to go forth, for the first time unwillingly, to pay his service, as his tenure bound him.

"It is hard," he said, "to be put forward in all the town feuds, when the fighting work is so detestable to Catharine. I am sure there are enough of wenches in Perth, that say to their gallants, 'Go out—do your devoir bravely, and win your lady's grace;' and yet they send not for their lovers, but for me, who cannot do the duties of a man to protect a minstrel woman, or of a burgess who fights for the honour of his town, but this peevish Catharine uses me as if I were a brawler and bordeller!"

Such were the thoughts which occupied his mind, when, as he

opened his door to issue forth, the person dearest to his thoughts, but whom he certainly least expected to see, was present to his eyes, and dropped into his arms.

His mixture of surprise, joy, and anxiety, did not deprive him of the presence of mind which the occasion demanded. To place Catharine Glover in safety, and recall her to herself, was to be thought of before rendering obedience to the summons of the Magistrates, however pressingly that had been delivered. He carried his lovely burden, as light as a feather, yet more precious than the same quantity of purest gold, into a small bed-chamber which had been his mother's. It was the most fit for an invalid, as it looked into the garden, and was separated from the noise of the tumult.

"Here, Nurse—Nurse Shoolbred—come quick—come for death and life—here is one wants thy help!"

Up trotted the old dame. "If it should but prove any one that will keep thee out of the scuffle"—for she also had been aroused by the noise,—but what was her astonishment, when, placed in love and reverence on the bed of her late mistress, and supported by the athletic arms of her foster son, she saw the apparently lifeless form of the Fair Maid of Perth. "Catharine Glover!" she said; "and, Holy Mother—a dying woman, as it would seem!"

"Not, so, old woman," said her foster son; "the dear heart throbs —the sweet breath comes and returns! Come thou, that may aid her more meetly than I—bring water—essences—whatever thy old skill can devise. Heaven did not place her in my arms to die, but to live for herself and me!"

With an activity which her age little promised, Nurse Shoolbred collected the means of restoring animation; for, like many women of the period, she understood what was to be done in such cases, nay, possessed a knowledge of treating wounds of an ordinary description, which the warlike propensities of her foster son kept in pretty constant exercise.

"Come now," she said, "son Henry, unfold your arms from about my patient—though she is worth the pressing—and set thy hands at freedom to help me with what I want. Nay, I will not insist on your quitting her hand, if you will beat the palm gently, as the fingers unclose their clenched grasp."

"*I* beat her slight beautiful hand!" said Henry; "you were as well bid me beat a glass cup with a fore-hammer, as tap her fair palm with my horn-hard fingers. But the fingers do unfold, and we will find a better way than beating;" and he applied his lips to the pretty hand, whose motion indicated returning sensation. One or two deep sighs succeeded, and the Fair Maid of Perth opened her eyes, fixed them on her lover, as he kneeled by the bedside, and again sunk back on the pillow. As she withdrew not her hand from her lover's hold or from his grasp, we must in charity believe that the return to

consciousness was not so complete as to make her aware that he abused the advantage, by pressing it alternately to his lips and his bosom. At the same time we are compelled to own, that the blood was colouring in her cheek, and that her breathing was deep and regular, for a minute or two during this relapse.

The noise at the door began now to grow much louder, and Henry was called for by all his various names, of Smith, Gow, and Hal of the Wynd, as heathens used to summon their deities by different epithets. At last, like Portuguese Catholics when exhausted with entreating their saints, the crowd without had recourse to vituperative exclamations.

"Out upon you, Henry! You are a disgraced man, mansworn to your burgher-oath, and a traitor to the Fair City, unless you come instantly forth!"

It would seem that Nurse Shoolbred's applications were now so far successful, that Catharine's senses were in some measure restored; for turning her face more towards that of her lover, than her former posture permitted, she let her right hand fall on his shoulder, leaving her left still in his possession, and seeming slightly to detain him, while she whispered, "Do not go, Henry—stay with me—they will kill thee, these men of blood."

It would seem that this gentle invocation, the result of finding the lover alive whom she expected to have only recognized as a corpse, though it was spoken so low as scarcely to be intelligible, had more effect to keep Henry Wynd in his present posture, than the repeated summons of many voices from without had to bring him down stairs.

"Mass, townsmen," cried one hardy citizen to his companions, "the saucy Smith but jests with us! Let us into the house, and bring him out by the lug and the horn."

"Take care what you are doing," said a more cautious assailant. "The man that presses on Henry Gow's retirement may go into his house with sound bones, but will return with ready-made work for the surgeon. But here comes one has good right to do our errand to him, and make the recreant hear reason on both sides of his head."

The person of whom this was spoken was no other than Simon Glover himself. He had arrived at the fatal spot where the unlucky Bonnet-maker's body was lying, just in time to discover, to his great relief, that when it was turned with the face upwards by Bailie Craigdallie's orders, the features of the poor braggart Proudfute were recognized, when the crowd expected to behold those of their favourite champion Henry Smith. A laugh, or something approaching to one, went among those who remembered how hard Oliver had struggled to obtain the character of a fighting man, however foreign to his nature and disposition, and remarked now, that he had met with a mode of death much better suited to his pretensions than to his temper. But this tendency to ill-timed mirth, which savoured of the rudeness of the times, was at once hushed by the voice, and cries, and

exclamations of a woman, who struggled through the crowd, screaming at the same time,—"Oh, my husband!—my husband!"

Room was made for the sorrower, who was followed by two or three female friends. Maudie Proudfute had been hitherto only noticed as a good-looking, black-haired woman, believed to be *dink** and disdainful to those whom she thought meaner or poorer than herself, and lady and empress over her late husband, whom she quickly caused to lower his crest when she chanced to hear him crowing out of season. But now, under the influence of powerful passion, she assumed a far more imposing character.

"Do you laugh," she said, "you unworthy burghers of Perth, because one of your own citizens has poured his blood into the kennel?—or do you laugh because the deadly lot has lighted on my husband? How has he deserved this? Did he not maintain an honest house by his own industry, and keep a creditable board, where the sick had welcome, and the poor had relief? Did he not lend to those who wanted,—stand by his neighbours as a friend, keep counsel and do justice like a magistrate?"

"It is true, it is true," answered the assembly; "his blood is our blood, as much as if it were Henry Gow's."

"You speak truth, neighbours," said Bailie Craigdallie; "and this feud cannot be patched up as the former was—citizen's blood must not flow unavenged down our kennels, as if it were ditch-water, or we shall soon see the broad Tay crimsoned with it. But this blow was never meant for the poor man on whom it has unhappily fallen. Every one knew what Oliver Proudfute was, how wide he would speak, and how little he would do. He has Henry Smith's buff-coat, target, and head-piece. All the town know them as well as I do; there is no doubt on't. He had the trick, as you know, of trying to imitate the Smith in most things. Some one, blind with rage, or perhaps through liquor, has stricken the innocent Bonnet-maker, whom no man either hated or feared, or indeed cared either much or little about, instead of the stout Smith, who has twenty feuds upon his hands."

"What then is to be done, Bailie?" cried the multitude.

"That, my friends, your magistrates will determine for you, as we shall instantly meet together when Sir Patrick Charteris cometh here, which must be anon. Meanwhile, let the chirurgeon Dwining examine that poor piece of clay, that he may tell us how he came by his fatal death; and then let the corpse be decently swathed in a clean shroud, as becomes an honest citizen, and placed before the high altar in the Church of St. John, the patron of the Fair City. Cease all clamour and noise, and every defensible man of you, as you would wish well to the Fair Town, keep his weapons in readiness, and be prepared to assemble on the High Street, at the tolling of the common bell from the Town-House, and we will either revenge the death of our fellow

* Contemptuous—scornful of others.

citizen, or else we shall take such fortune as Heaven will send us. Meanwhile avoid all quarrelling with the knights and their followers, till we know the innocent from the guilty. But wherefore tarries this knave Smith? He is ready enough in tumults when his presence is not wanted, and lags he now when his presence may serve the Fair City? What ails him, doth any one know? Hath he been upon the frolic last Fastern's Even?"

"Rather he is sick or sullen, Master Bailie," said one of the city's mairs, or sergeants; "for though he is within door, as his knaves report, yet he will neither answer to us nor admit us."

"So please your worship, Master Bailie," said Simon Glover, "I will go myself to fetch Henry Smith. I have some little difference to make up with him. And blessed be Our Lady, who hath so ordered it, that I find him alive, as a quarter of an hour since I could never have expected!"

"Bring the stout Smith to the Council-house," said the Bailie, as a mounted yeoman pressed through the crowd, and whispered in his ear, —"Here is a good fellow, who says the Knight of Kinfauns is entering the port."

Such was the occasion of Simon Glover presenting himself at the house of Henry Gow at the period already noticed.

Unrestrained by the considerations of doubt and hesitation which influenced others, he repaired to the parlour; and having overheard the bustling of Dame Shoolbred, he took the privilege of intimacy to ascend to the bedroom, and, with the slight apology of—"I crave your pardon, good neighbour," he opened the door, and entered the apartment, where a singular and unexpected sight awaited him. At the sound of his voice, May Catharine experienced a revival much speedier than Dame Shoolbred's restoratives had been able to produce; and the paleness of her complexion changed into a deep glow of the most lovely red. She pushed her lover from her with both her hands, which, until this minute, her want of consciousness, or her affection, awakened by the events of the morning, had wellnigh abandoned to his caresses. Henry Smith, bashful as we know him, stumbled as he rose up; and none of the party were without a share of confusion, excepting Dame Shoolbred, who was glad to make some pretext to turn her back to the others, in order that she might enjoy a laugh at their expense, which she felt herself utterly unable to restrain, and in which the Glover, whose surprise, though great, was of short duration, and of a joyful character, sincerely joined.

"Now, by good St. John," he said, "I thought I had seen a sight this morning that would cure me of laughter, at least till Lent was over; but this would make me curl my cheek, if I were dying. Why, here stands honest Henry Smith, who was lamented as dead, and toll'd out for from every steeple in town, alive, merry, and, as it seems from his ruddy complexion, as like to live as any man in Perth. And here

is my precious daughter, that yesterday would speak of nothing but the wickedness of the wights that haunt profane sports, and protect glee-maidens—Ay, she who set St. Valentine and St. Cupid

Catharine at the house of the Smith.

both at defiance,—here she is, turned a glee-maiden herself, for what I can see! Truly, I am glad to see that you, my good Dame Shoolbred, who give way to no disorder, have been of this loving party."

"You do me wrong, my dearest father," said Catharine, as if about

to weep. "I came here with far different expectations than you suppose. I only came because—because——"

"Because you expected to find a dead lover," said her father, "and you have found a living one, who can receive the tokens of your regard, and return them. Now, were it not a sin, I could find in my heart to thank Heaven, that thou hast been surprised at last into owning thyself a woman—Simon Glover is not worthy to have an absolute saint for his daughter. Nay, look not so piteously, nor expect condolence from me! Only I will try not to look merry, if you will be pleased to stop your tears, or confess them to be tears of joy."

"If I were to die for such a confession," said poor Catharine, "I could not tell what to call them. Only believe, dear father, and let Henry believe, that I would never have come hither, unless—unless——"

"Unless you had thought that Henry could not come to you," said her father. "And now, shake hands in peace and concord, and agree as Valentines should. Yesterday was Shrovetide, Henry—We will hold that thou hast confessed thy follies, hast obtained absolution, and art relieved of all the guilt thou stoodest charged with."

"Nay, touching that, father Simon," said the Smith, "now that you are cool enough to hear me, I can swear on the Gospels, and I can call my nurse, Dame Shoolbred, to witness——"

"Nay, nay," said the Glover, "but wherefore rake up differences, which should all be forgotten?"

"Hark ye, Simon!—Simon Glover!" This was now echoed from beneath.

"True, son Smith," said the Glover, seriously, "we have other work in hand. You and I must to the council instantly. Catharine shall remain here with Dame Shoolbred, who will take charge of her till we return; and then, as the town is in misrule, we two, Harry, will carry her home, and they will be bold men that cross us."

"Nay, my dear father," said Catharine, with a smile, "now you are taking Oliver Proudfute's office. That doughty burgher is Henry's brother-at-arms."

Her father's countenance grew dark.

"You have spoke a stinging word, daughter; but you know not what has happened. Kiss him, Catharine, in token of forgiveness."

"Not so," said Catharine; "I have done him too much grace already. When he has seen the errant damsel safe home, it will be time enough to claim his reward."

"Meantime," said Henry, "I will claim, as your host, what you will not allow me on other terms."

He folded the fair maiden in his arms, and was permitted to take the salute which she had refused to bestow.

As they descended the stair together, the old man laid his hand on the Smith's shoulder, and said, "Henry, my dearest wishes are fulfilled;

but it is the pleasure of the saints that it should be in an hour of difficulty and terror."

"True," said the Smith; "but thou knowest, father, if our riots be frequent at Perth, at least they seldom last long."

Then opening a door which led from the house into the smithy, "Here, comrades," he cried, "Anton, Cuthbert, Dingwell, and Ringan! Let none of you stir from the place till I return. Be as true as the weapons I have taught you to forge; a French crown and a Scotch merry-making for you, if you obey my command. I leave a mighty treasure in your charge. Watch the doors well—let little Jannekin scout up and down the wynd, and have your arms ready if any one approaches the house. Open the doors to no man, till father Glover or I return; it concerns my life and happiness."

The strong swarthy giants to whom he spoke, answered, "Death to him who attempts it!"

"My Catharine is now as safe," said he to her father, "as if twenty men garrisoned a royal castle in her cause. We shall pass most quietly to the Council-house by walking through the garden."

He led the way through a little orchard accordingly, where the birds, which had been sheltered and fed during the winter by the good-natured artisan, early in the season as it was, were saluting the precarious smiles of a February sun, with a few faint and interrupted attempts at melody.

"Hear these minstrels, father," said the Smith; "I laughed at them this morning in the bitterness of my heart, because the little wretches sung, with so much of winter before them. But now, methinks, I could bear a blithe chorus, for I have my Valentine as they have theirs; and whatever ill may lie before me for to-morrow, I am to-day the happiest man in Perth, city or county, burgh or landward."

"Yet I must allay your joy," said the old Glover, "though, Heaven knows, I share it. Poor Oliver Proudfute, the inoffensive fool that you and I knew so well, has been found this morning dead in the streets.".

"Only dead drunk, I trust?" said the Smith; "nay, a caudle and a dose of matrimonial advice will bring him to life again."

"No, Henry, no. He is slain—slain with a battle-axe, or some such weapon."

"Impossible!" replied the Smith; "he was light-footed enough, and would not for all Perth have trusted to his hands, when he could extricate himself by his heels."

"No choice was allowed him. The blow was dealt in the very back of his head; he who struck must have been a shorter man than himself, and used a horseman's battle-axe, or some such weapon, for a Lochaber-axe must have struck the upper part of his head. But there he lies dead, brained, I may say, by a most frightful wound."

"This is inconceivable," said Henry Wynd. "He was in my house at midnight, in a morricer's habit; seemed to have been drinking, though not to excess. He told me a tale of having been beset by revellers, and being in danger; but, alas! you know the man; I deemed it was a swaggering fit, as he sometimes took when he was in liquor; and, may the Merciful Virgin forgive me! I let him go without company, in which I did him inhuman wrong. Holy St. John be my witness! I would have gone with any helpless creature; and far more with him, with whom I have so often sat at the same board, and drunken of the same cup. Who, of the race of man, could have thought of harming a creature so simple, and so unoffending, excepting by his idle vaunts!"

"Henry, he wore thy head-piece, thy buff-coat, thy target—How came he by these?"

"Why, he demanded the use of them for the night, and I was ill at ease, and well pleased to be rid of his company; having kept no holiday, and being determined to keep none, in respect of our misunderstanding."

"It is the opinion of Bailie Craigdallie, and all our sagest counsellors, that the blow was intended for yourself, and that it becomes you to prosecute the due vengeance of our fellow-citizen, who received the death which was meant for you."

The Smith was for some time silent. They had now left the garden, and were walking in a lonely lane, by which they meant to approach the Council-house of the burgh, without being exposed to observation or idle inquiry.

"You are silent, my son, yet we two have much to speak of," said Simon Glover. "Bethink thee that this widowed woman Maudlin, if she should see cause to bring a charge against any one for the wrong done to her and her orphan children, must support it by a champion, according to law and custom; for be the murderer who he may, we know enough of these followers of the nobles to be assured, that the party suspected will appeal to the combat, in derision, perhaps, of those whom they will call the cowardly burghers. While we are men with blood in our veins, this must not be, Henry Wynd."

"I see where you would draw me, father," answered Henry, dejectedly; "and St. John knows I have heard a summons to battle as willingly as war-horse ever heard the trumpet. But bethink you, father, how I have lost Catharine's favour repeatedly, and have been driven well-nigh to despair of ever regaining it, for being, if I may say so, even too ready a man of my hands. And here are all our quarrels made up, and the hopes, that seemed this morning removed beyond earthly prospect, have become nearer and brighter than ever; and must I, with the dear one's kiss of forgiveness on my lips, engage in a new scene of violence, which you are well aware will give her the deepest offence?"

"It is hard for me to advise you, Henry," said Simon; "but this I

must ask you—Have you, or have you not, reason to think, that this poor unfortunate Oliver has been mistaken for you?"

"I fear it too much," said Henry. "He was thought something like me, and the poor fool had studied to ape my gestures and manner of walking, nay, the very airs which I have the trick of whistling, that he might increase a resemblance which has cost him dear. I have ill-willers enough, both in burgh and landward, to owe me a shrewd turn; and he, I think, could have none such."

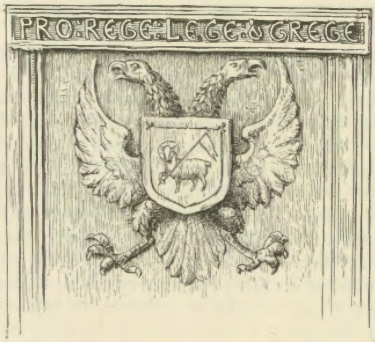
"Well, Henry, I cannot say but my daughter will be offended. She has been much with Father Clement, and has received notions about peace and forgiveness, which methinks suit ill with a country where the laws cannot protect us, unless we have spirit to protect ourselves. If you determine for the combat, I will do my best to persuade her to look on the matter as the other good womanhood in the burgh will do; and if you resolve to let the matter rest—the man who has lost his life for yours remaining unavenged—the widow and the orphans without any reparation for the loss of a husband and father—I will then do you the justice to remember, that I, at least, ought not to think the worse of you for your patience, since it was adopted for love of my child. But, Henry, we must in that case remove ourselves from bonny St. Johnston, for here we will be but a disgraced family."

Henry groaned deeply, and was silent for an instant, then replied, "I would rather be dead than dishonoured, though I should never see her again! Had it been yester evening, I would have met the best blade among these men-at-arms as blithely as ever I danced at a May-pole. But to-day, when she had first as good as said, 'Henry Smith, I love thee!'—Father Glover, it is very hard. Yet it is all my own fault! This poor unhappy Oliver! I ought to have allowed him the shelter of my roof, when he prayed me in his agony of fear; or, had I gone with him, I should then have prevented or shared his fate. But I taunted him, ridiculed him, loaded him with maledictions, though the saints know they were uttered in idle peevishness of impatience. I drove him out from my doors, whom I knew so helpless, to take the fate which was perhaps intended for me. I must avenge him, or be dishonoured for ever. See, father—I have been called a man hard as the steel I work in—Does burnished steel ever drop tears like this?—Shame on me that I should shed them!"

"It is no shame, my dearest son," said Simon; "thou art as kind as brave, and I have always known it. There is yet a chance for us. No one may be discovered to whom suspicion attaches, and where none such is found, the combat cannot take place. It is a hard thing to wish that the innocent blood may not be avenged. But if the perpetrator of this foul murder be hidden for the present, thou wilt be saved from the task of seeking that vengeance which Heaven, doubtless, will take at its own proper time."

As they spoke thus, they arrived at the point of the High Street

where the Council house was situated. As they reached the door, and made their way through the multitude who thronged the street, they found the avenues guarded by a select party of armed burghers, and about fifty spears belonging to the Knight of Kinfauns, who, with his allies the Grays, Blairs, Moncrieffs, and others, had brought to Perth a considerable body of horse, of which these were a part. So soon as the Glover and Smith presented themselves, they were admitted to the chamber in which the magistrates were assembled.



CHAPTER XX.

"A woman wails for justice at the gate,
A widow'd woman, wan and desolate."

BERTHA.

THE Council-room of Perth * presented a singular spectacle. In a gloomy apartment, ill and inconveniently lighted by two windows of different form and of unequal size, were assembled, around a large oaken table, a group of men, of whom those who occupied the higher seats were merchants, that is, guild brethren, or shopkeepers, arrayed in decent dresses becoming their station, but most of them bearing, like the Regent York, "signs of war around their aged necks;" gorgets, namely, and baldricks, which sustained their weapons. The lower places around the table were occupied by mechanics and artisans, the presidents, or deacons, as they were termed, of the working classes, in their ordinary clothes, somewhat better arranged than usual. These too wore pieces of armour of various descriptions. Some had the black jack, or doublet, covered with small plates of iron of a lozenge shape, which secured through the upper angle, hung in rows above each, and which, swaying with the motion of the wearer's person, formed a secure defence to the body. Others had buff-coats, which, as already mentioned, could resist the blow of a sword, and even a lance's point, unless propelled with great force. At the bottom of the table, surrounded as it was with this varied assembly, sat Sir Louis Lundin; no military man, but a priest and parson of St. John's, arrayed in his canonical dress, and having his pen and ink before him. He was town-clerk of the burgh, and, like all the priests of the period, (who were called from that circumstance the

* Note XI. The Council-Room.

Pope's knights,) received the honourable title of *Dominus*, contracted into Dom, or Dan, or translated into SIR, the title of reverence due to the secular chivalry.

On an elevated seat, at the head of the council board, was placed Sir Patrick Charteris, in complete armour, brightly burnished; a singular contrast to the motley mixture of warlike and peaceful attire exhibited by the burghers, who were only called to arms occasionally. The bearing of the Provost, while it completely admitted the intimate connection which mutual interests had created betwixt himself, the burgh, and the magistracy, was at the same time calculated to assert the superiority, which, in virtue of gentle blood and chivalrous rank,

The Provost's squires and pages.

the opinions of the age assigned to him over the members of the assembly in which he presided. Two squires stood behind him, one of them holding the knight's pennon, and another his shield, bearing his armorial distinctions, being a hand holding a dagger, or short sword, with the proud motto, *This is my charter*. A handsome page displayed the long sword of his master, and another bore his lance; all which chivalrous emblems and appurtenances were the more scrupulously exhibited, that the dignitary to whom they belonged was engaged in discharging the office of a burgh magistrate. In his own person the Knight of Kinfauns appeared to affect something of state and stiffness, which did not naturally pertain to his frank and jovial character.

"So, you are come at length, Henry Smith and Simon Glover," said the Provost. "Know that you have kept us waiting for your

attendance. Should it so chance again while we occupy this place, we will lay such a fine on you as you will have small pleasure in paying. Enough—make no excuses. They are not asked now, and another time they will not be admitted. Know, sirs, that our reverend clerk hath taken down in writing, and at full length, what I will tell you in brief, that you may see what is to be required of you, Henry Smith, in particular. Our late fellow-citizen, Oliver Proudfute, hath been found dead in the High Street, close by the entrance into the Wynd. It seemeth he was slain by a heavy blow with a short axe, dealt from behind and at unawares; and the act by which he fell can only be termed a deed of foul and forethought murder. So much for the crime. The criminal can only be indicated by circumstances. It is recorded in the protocol of the Reverend Sir Louis Lundin, that divers well-reputed witnesses saw our deceased citizen, Oliver Proudfute, till a late period, accompanying the Entry of the morrice-dancers,* of whom he was one, as far as the house of Simon Glover, in Curfew Street, where they again played their pageant. It is also manifested, that at this place he separated from the rest of the band, after some discourse with Simon Glover, and made an appointment to meet with the others of his company at the sign of the Griffin, there to conclude the holiday. Now, Simon, I demand of you whether this be truly stated, so far as you know? And further, what was the purport of the defunct Oliver Proudfute's discourse with you?"

"My Lord Provost and very worshipful Sir Patrick," answered Simon Glover, "you and this honourable council shall know, that, touching certain reports which had been made of the conduct of Henry Smith, some quarrel had arisen between myself and another of my family, and the said Smith here present. Now, this our poor fellow-citizen, Oliver Proudfute, having been active in spreading these reports, as indeed his element lay in such gossipred, some words passed betwixt him and me on the subject; and, as I think, he left me with the purpose of visiting Henry Smith, for he broke off from the morrice-dancers, promising, as it seems, to meet them, as your honour has said, at the sign of the Griffin, in order to conclude the evening. But what he actually did, I know not, as I never again saw him in life."

"It is enough," said Sir Patrick, "and agrees with all that we have heard. Now, worthy sirs, we next find our poor fellow-citizen environed by a set of revellers and maskers, who had assembled in the High Street, by whom he was shamefully ill-treated, being compelled to kneel down in the street, and there to quaff huge quantities of liquor against his inclination, until at length he escaped from them by flight. This violence was accomplished with drawn swords, loud shouts, and imprecations, so as to attract the attention of several persons, who, alarmed by the tumult, looked out from their windows, as well as of

* Note XII. Morrice-Dancers.

one or two passengers, who, keeping aloof from the light of the torches, lest they also had been maltreated, beheld the usage which our fellow-citizen received in the High Street of the burgh. And although these revellers were disguised, and used vizards, yet their disguises were well known, being a set of quaint masking habits, prepared some weeks ago by command of Sir John Ramorny, Master of the Horse to his Royal Highness the Duke of Rothsay, Prince Royal of Scotland."

A low groan went through the assembly.

"Yes; so it is, brave burghers," continued Sir Patrick; "our inquiries have led us into conclusions both melancholy and terrible. But as no one can regret the point at which they seem likely to arrive more than I do, so no man living can dread its consequences less. It is even so—various artisans employed upon the articles, have described the dresses prepared for Sir John Ramorny's mask as being exactly similar to those of the men by whom Oliver Proudfute was observed to be maltreated. And one mechanic, being Wingfield the feather-dresser, who saw the revellers when they had our fellow-citizen within their hands, remarked that they wore the cinctures and coronals of painted feathers, which he himself had made by the order of the Prince's Master of the Horse.

"After the moment of his escape from these revellers, we lose all trace of Oliver; but we can prove that the maskers went to Sir John Ramorny's, where they were admitted, after some show of delay. It is rumoured, that thou, Henry Smith, sawest our unhappy fellow-citizen after he had been in the hands of these revellers. What is the truth of that matter?"

"He came to my house in the Wynd," said Henry, "about half an hour before midnight; and I admitted him, something unwillingly, as he had been keeping carnival while I remained at home; and there is ill talk, says the proverb, betwixt a full man and a fasting."

"And in which plight seemed he when thou didst admit him?" said the Provost.

"He seemed," answered the Smith, "out of breath, and talked repeatedly of having been endangered by revellers. I paid but small regard, for he was ever a timorous, chicken-spirited, though well-meaning man, and I held that he was speaking more from fancy than reality. But I shall always account it for foul offence in myself, that I did not give him my company, which he requested; and if I live, I will found masses for his soul, in expiation of my guilt."

"Did he describe those from whom he received the injury?" said the Provost.

"Revellers in masking habits," replied Henry.

"And did he intimate his fear of having to do with them on his return?" again demanded Sir Patrick.

"He alluded particularly to his being waylaid, which I treated as visionary, having been able to see no one in the lane."

"Had he then no help from thee of any kind whatsoever?" said the Provost.

"Yes, worshipful," replied the Smith; "he exchanged his morrice dress for my head-piece, buff-coat, and target, which I hear were found upon his body; and I have at home his morrice-cap and bells, with

The Council-room of Perth.

the jerkin and other things pertaining. He was to return my garb of fence, and get back his own masking suit this day, had the saints so permitted."

"You saw him not then afterwards?"

"Never, my lord."

"One word more," said the Provost. "Have you any reason to think that the blow which slew Oliver Proudfute was meant for another man?"

"I have," answered the Smith; "but it is doubtful, and may be dangerous to add such a conjecture, which is besides only a supposition."

"Speak it out, on your burgher faith and oath—For whom, think you, was the blow meant?"

"If I must speak," replied Henry, "I believe Oliver Proudfute received the fate which was designed for myself; the rather that, in his folly, Oliver spoke of trying to assume my manner of walking, as well as my dress."

"Have you feud with any one, that you form such an idea?" said Sir Patrick Charteris.

"To my shame and sin be it spoken, I have feud with Highland and Lowland, English and Scot, Perth and Angus. I do not believe poor Oliver has feud with a new-hatched chicken. Alas! he was the more fully prepared for a sudden call!"

"Hark ye, Smith," said the Provost,—"Answer me distinctly. Is there cause of feud between the household of Sir John Ramorny and yourself?"

"To a certainty, my lord, there is. It is now generally said, that Black Quentin, who went over Tay to Fife some days since, was the owner of the hand which was found in Couvrefew Street upon the eve of St. Valentine. It was I who struck off that hand with a blow of my broadsword. As this Black Quentin was a chamberlain of Sir John, and much trusted, it is like there must be feud between me and his master's dependents."

"It bears a likely front, Smith," said Sir Patrick Charteris. "And now, good brothers and wise magistrates, there are two suppositions, each of which leads to the same conclusion. The maskers who seized our fellow-citizen, and misused him in a manner of which his body retains some slight marks, may have met with their former prisoner as he returned homewards, and finished their ill usage by taking his life. He himself expressed to Henry Gow fears that this would be the case. If this be really true, one or more of Sir John Ramorny's attendants must have been the assassins. But I think it more likely that one or two of the revellers may have remained on the field, or returned to it, having changed perhaps their disguise, and that to those men (for Oliver Proudfute, in his own personal appearance, would only have been a subject of sport) his apparition in the dress, and assuming, as he proposed to do, the manner, of Henry Smith, was matter of deep hatred; and that seeing him alone, they had taken, as they thought, a certain and safe mode to rid themselves of an enemy so dangerous as all men know Henry Wynd is accounted by those that are his unfriends. The same train of reasoning, again, rests the guilt with the household of Sir John Ramorny. How think you, sirs? Are we not free to charge the crime upon them?"

The magistrates whispered together for several minutes, and then

replied by the voice of Bailie Craigdallie,—"Noble Knight, and our worthy Provost,—we agree entirely in what your wisdom has spoken concerning this dark and bloody matter; nor do we doubt your sagacity in tracing to the fellowship and the company of John Ramorny of that Ilk, the villainy which hath been done to our deceased fellow-citizen, whether in his own character and capacity, or as mistaking him for our brave townsman, Henry of the Wynd. But Sir John, in his own behalf, and as the Prince's Master of the Horse, maintains an extensive household; and as of course the charge will be rebutted by a denial, we would ask, how we shall proceed in that case?—It is true, could we find law for firing the lodging, and putting all within it to the sword, the old proverb of 'short rede, good rede,' might here apply; for a fouler household of defiers of God, destroyers of men, and debauchers of women, are nowhere sheltered than are in Ramorny's band. But I doubt that this summary mode of execution could scarce be borne out by the laws; and no tittle of evidence which I have heard will tend to fix the crime on any single individual or individuals."

Before the Provost could reply, the Town-clerk arose, and stroking his venerable beard, craved permission to speak, which was instantly granted. "Brethren," he said, "as well in our fathers' time as ours, hath God, on being rightly appealed to, condescended to make manifest the crimes of the guilty, and the innocence of those who may have been rashly accused. Let us demand from our Sovereign Lord, King Robert, who, when the wicked do not interfere to pervert his good intentions, is as just and clement a Prince as our annals can show in their long line, in the name of the Fair City, and of all the commons in Scotland, that he gives us, after the fashion of our ancestors, the means of appealing to Heaven for light upon this dark murder. We will demand the proof by *bier-right*, often granted in the days of our Sovereign's ancestors, approved of by bulls and decretals, and administered by the great Emperor Charlemagne in France, by King Arthur in Britain, and by Gregory the Great, and the mighty Achaius, in this our land of Scotland."

"I have heard of the bier-right, Sir Louis," quoth the Provost, "and I know we have it in our charters of the Fair City; but I am something ill-learned in the ancient laws, and would pray you to inform us more distinctly of its nature."

"We will demand of the King," said Sir Louis Lundin, "my advice being taken, that the body of our murdered fellow-citizen be transported into the High Church of St. John,* and suitable masses said for the benefit of his soul, and for the discovery of his foul murder. Meantime we shall obtain an order that Sir John Ramorny give up a list of such of his household as were in Perth in the course of the night between Fastern's Even and this Ash-Wednesday, and become bound to present them on a certain day and hour, to be early named, in the High Church

* See Note XIII. Church of St John.

of St. John; there one by one to pass before the bier of our murdered fellow-citizen, and in the form prescribed to call upon God and his saints to bear witness that he is innocent of the acting, art or part, of the murder. And credit me, as has been indeed proved by numerous instances, that if the murderer shall endeavour to shroud himself by making such an appeal, the antipathy which subsists between the dead body, and the hand which dealt the fatal blow that divorced it from the soul, will awaken some imperfect life, under the influence of which the veins of the dead man will pour forth at the fatal wounds the blood which has been so long stagnant in the veins. Or, to speak more certainly, it is the pleasure of Heaven, by some hidden agency which we cannot comprehend, to leave open this mode of discovering the wickedness of him who has defaced the image of his Creator."

"I have heard this law talked of," said Sir Patrick, "and it was enforced in the Bruce's time. This surely is no unfit period to seek, by such a mystic mode of inquiry, the truth, to which no ordinary means can give us access, seeing that a general accusation of Sir John's household would full surely be met by a general denial. Yet, I must crave farther of Sir Louis, our reverend Town-clerk, how we shall prevent the guilty person from escaping in the interim?"

"The burghers will maintain a strict watch upon the wall, draw-bridges shall be raised, and portcullises lowered, from sunset to sunrise, and strong patrols maintained through the night. This guard the burghers will willingly maintain, to secure against the escape of the murderer of their townsman."

The rest of the counsellors acquiesced, by word, sign, and look, in this proposal.

"Again," said the Provost, "what if any one of the suspected household refuse to submit to the ordeal of bier-right?"

"He may appeal to that of combat," said the reverend city scribe, "with an opponent of equal rank; because the accused person must have his choice, in the appeal to the judgment of God, by what ordeal he will be tried. But if he refuses both, he must be held as guilty, and so punished."

The sages of the council unanimously agreed with the opinion of their Provost and Town-clerk, and resolved, in all formality, to petition the King, as a matter of right, that the murder of their fellow-citizen should be inquired into according to this ancient form, which was held to manifest the truth, and received as a matter of evidence in case of murder, so late as towards the end of the seventeenth century. But before the meeting dissolved, Bailie Craigdallie thought it meet to inquire, who was to be the champion of Maudie, or Magdalen Proudfute, and her two children.

"There need be little inquiry about that," said Sir Patrick Charteris; "we are men, and wear swords, which should be broken over the head of any one amongst us, who will not draw it in behalf of

the widow and orphans of our murdered fellow-citizen, and in brave revenge of his death. If Sir John Ramorny shall personally resent the inquiry, Patrick Charteris of Kinfauns will do battle with him to the

Proudfute's widow chooses Henry Gow for her champion.

outrance, whilst horse and man may stand, or spear and blade hold together. But in case the challenger be of yeomanly degree, well wot I that Magdalen Proudfute may choose her own champion among the bravest burghers of Perth, and shame and dishonour were it to the

Fair City for ever, could she light upon one who were traitor and coward enough to say her nay! Bring her hither, that she may make her election."

Henry Smith heard this with a melancholy anticipation that the poor woman's choice would light upon him, and that his recent reconciliation with his mistress would be again dissolved, by his being engaged in a fresh quarrel, from which there lay no honourable means of escape, and which, in any other circumstances, he would have welcomed as a glorious opportunity of distinguishing himself, both in sight of the court and of the city. He was aware that, under the tuition of Father Clement, Catharine viewed the ordeal of battle rather as an insult to religion, than an appeal to the Deity, and did not consider it as reasonable, that superior strength of arm, or skill of weapon, should be resorted to as the proof of moral guilt or innocence. He had, therefore, much to fear from her peculiar opinions in this particular, refined as they were beyond those of the age she lived in.

While he thus suffered under these contending feelings, Magdalen, the widow of the slaughtered man, entered the court, wrapt in a deep mourning veil, and followed and supported by five or six women of good, (that is, of respectability,) dressed in the same melancholy attire. One of her attendants held an infant in her arms, the last pledge of poor Oliver's nuptial affections. Another led a little tottering creature of two years, or thereabouts, which looked with wonder and fear, sometimes on the black dress in which they had muffled him, and sometimes on the scene around him.

The assembly rose to receive the melancholy group, and saluted them with an expression of the deepest sympathy, which Magdalen, though the mate of poor Oliver, returned with an air of dignity, which she borrowed, perhaps, from the extremity of her distress. Sir Patrick Charteris then stepped forward, and with the courtesy of a knight to a female, and of a protector to an oppressed and injured widow, took the poor woman's hand, and explained to her briefly, by what course the city had resolved to follow out the vengeance due for her husband's slaughter.

Having, with a softness and gentleness which did not belong to his general manner, ascertained that the unfortunate woman perfectly understood what was meant, he said aloud to the assembly, "Good citizens of Perth, and freeborn men of guild and craft, attend to what is about to pass, for it concerns your rights and privileges. Here stands Magdalen Proudfute, desirous to follow forth the revenge due for the death of her husband, foully murdered, as she sayeth, by Sir John Ramorny, Knight, of that Ilk, and which she offers to prove, by the evidence of bier-right, or by the body of a man. Therefore, I, Patrick Charteris, being a belted knight and freeborn gentleman, offer myself to do battle in her just quarrel, whilst man and horse may endure if any one of my degree shall lift my glove. How say you, Magdalen Proudfute, will you accept me for your champion?"

The widow answered with difficulty, "I can desire none nobler."

Sir Patrick then took her right hand in his, and, kissing her forehead, for such was the ceremony, said solemnly,—"So may God and St. John prosper me at my need, as I will do my devoir as your champion, knightly, truly, and manfully. Go now, Magdalen, and choose at your will among the burgesses of the Fair City, present or absent, any one upon whom you desire to rest your challenge, if he against whom you bring plaint shall prove to be beneath my degree."

All eyes were turned to Henry Smith, whom the general voice had already pointed out as in every respect the fittest to act as champion on the occasion. But the widow waited not for the general prompting of their looks. As soon as Sir Patrick had spoken, she crossed the floor to the place where, near the bottom of the table, the armourer stood among the men of his degree, and took him by the hand,—

"Henry Gow, or Smith," she said, "good burgher and craftsman, my—my——"

Husband, she would have said, but the word would not come forth; she was obliged to change the expression.

"He who is gone, loved and prized you over all men; therefore meet it is that thou shouldst follow out the quarrel of his widow and orphans."

If there had been a possibility, which in that age there was not, of Henry's rejecting or escaping from a trust for which all men seemed to destine him, every wish and idea of retreat was cut off, when the widow began to address him; and a command from Heaven could hardly have made a stronger impression than did the appeal of the unfortunate Magdalen. Her allusion to his intimacy with the deceased moved him to the soul. During Oliver's life, doubtless, there had been a strain of absurdity in his excessive predilection for Henry, which, considering how very different they were in character, had in it something ludicrous. But all this was now forgotten, and Henry, giving way to his natural ardour, only remembered that Oliver had been his friend and intimate; a man who had loved and honoured him as much as he was capable of entertaining such sentiments for any one; and above all, that there was much reason to suspect that the deceased had fallen victim to a blow meant for Henry himself.

It was, therefore, with an alacrity which, the minute before, he could scarce have commanded, and which seemed to express a stern pleasure, that, having pressed his lips to the cold brow of the unhappy Magdalen, the armourer replied,—

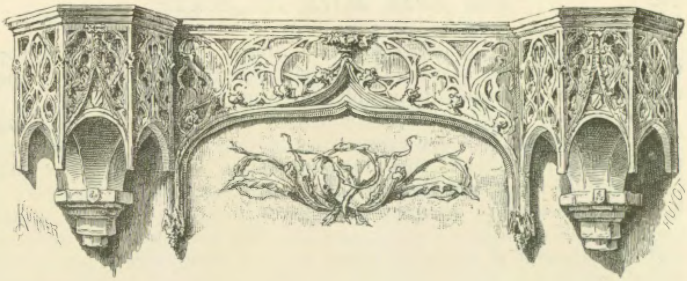
"I, Henry the Smith, dwelling in the Wynd of Perth, good man and true, and freely born, accept the office of champion to this widow Magdalen, and these orphans, and will do battle in their quarrel to the death, with any man whomsoever of my own degree, and that

so long as I shall draw breath. So help me at my need God and good St. John!"

There arose from the audience a half-suppressed cry, expressing the interest which the persons present took in the prosecution of the quarrel, and their confidence in the issue.

Sir Patrick Charteris then took measures for repairing to the King's presence, and demanding leave to proceed with inquiry into the murder of Oliver Proudfute, according to the custom of bier-right, and, if necessary, by combat.

He performed this duty after the Town-Council had dissolved, in a private interview between himself and the King, who heard of this new trouble with much vexation, and appointed next morning, after mass, for Sir Patrick and the parties interested, to attend his pleasure in council. In the meantime, a royal pursuivant was dispatched to the Constable's lodgings, to call over the roll of Sir John Ramorny's attendants, and charge him, with his whole retinue, under high penalties, to abide within Perth, until the King's pleasure should be farther known.



CHAPTER XXI.

"In God's name, see the lists and all things fit;
There let them end it—God defend the right!"
Henry IV. Part II.

IN the same Council-room of the conventual palace of the Dominicans, King Robert was seated with his brother Albany, whose affected austerity of virtue, and real art and dissimulation, maintained so high an influence over the feeble-minded monarch. It was indeed natural, that one who seldom saw things according to their real forms and outlines, should view them according to the light in which they were presented to him by a bold astucious man, possessing the claim of such near relationship.

Ever anxious on account of his misguided and unfortunate son, the King was now endeavouring to make Albany coincide in opinion with him, in exculpating Rothsay from any part in the death of the Bonnet-maker, the precognition concerning which had been left by Sir Patrick Charteris for his Majesty's consideration.

"This is an unhappy matter, brother Robin," he said, "a most unhappy occurrence; and goes nigh to put strife and quarrel betwixt the nobility and the commons here, as they have been at war together in so many distant lands. I see but one cause of comfort in the matter; and that is, that Sir John Ramorny having received his dismissal from the Duke of Rothsay's family, it cannot be said that he or any of his people, who may have done this bloody deed, (if it has truly been done by them,) have been encouraged or hounded out upon such an errand by my poor boy. I am sure, brother, you and I can bear witness, how readily, upon my entreaties, he agreed to dismiss Ramorny from his service, on account of that brawl in Curfew Street."

"I remember his doing so," said Albany; "and well do I hope that the connection betwixt the Prince and Ramorny has not been renewed since he seemed to comply with your Grace's wishes."

"Seemed to comply?—The connection renewed?" said the King; "what mean you by these expressions, brother? Surely, when David promised to me, that if that unhappy matter of Curfew Street were but smothered up and concealed, he would part with Ramorny, as he was a counsellor thought capable of involving him in similar fooleries, and would acquiesce in our inflicting on him either exile, or such punishment as it should please us to impose—surely you cannot doubt that he was sincere in his professions, and would keep his word? Remember you not, that when you advised that a heavy fine should be levied upon his estate in Fife in lieu of banishment, the Prince himself seemed to say, that exile would be better for Ramorny, and even for himself?"

"I remember it well, my royal brother. Nor, truly, could I have suspected Ramorny of having so much influence over the Prince, after having been accessary to placing him in a situation so perilous, had it not been for my royal kinsman's own confession, alluded to by your Grace, that, if suffered to remain at court, he might still continue to influence his conduct. I then regretted I had advised a fine in place of exile. But that time is passed, and now new mischief has occurred, fraught with much peril to your Majesty, as well as to your royal heir, and to the whole kingdom."

"What mean you, Robin?" said the weak-minded King. "By the tomb of our parents! by the soul of Bruce, our immortal ancestor! I entreat thee, my dearest brother, to take compassion on me. Tell me what evil threatens my son, or my kingdom?"

The features of the King, trembling with anxiety, and his eyes brimful of tears, were bent upon his brother, who seemed to assume time for consideration ere he replied,

"My lord, the danger lies here. Your Grace believes that the Prince had no accession to this second aggression upon the citizens of Perth—the slaughter of this bonnet-making fellow, about whose death they clamour, as a set of gulls about their comrade, when one of the noisy brood is struck down by a boy's shaft."

"Their lives," said the King, "are dear to themselves and their friends, Robin."

"Truly, ay, my liege; and they make them dear to us too, ere we can settle with the knaves for the least blood-witt. But, as I said, your Majesty thinks the Prince had no share in this last slaughter. I will not attempt to shake your belief in that delicate point, but will endeavour to believe along with you. What you think is rule for me. Robert of Albany will never think otherwise than Robert of broad Scotland."

"Thank you, thank you," said the King, taking his brother's hand.

"I knew I might rely that your affection would do justice to poor heedless Rothsay, who exposes himself to so much misconstruction that he scarcely deserves the sentiments you feel for him."

Albany had such an immovable constancy of purpose, that he was able to return the fraternal pressure of the King's hand, while tearing up by the very roots the hopes of the indulgent, fond old man.

"But, alas!" the Duke continued, with a sigh, "this burly intractable Knight of Kinfauns, and his brawling herd of burghers, will not view the matter as we do. They have the boldness to say, that this dead fellow had been misused by Rothsay and his fellows, who were in the street in mask and revel, stopping men and women, compelling them to dance, or to drink huge quantities of wine, with other follies needless to recount; and they say, that the whole party repaired to Sir John Ramorny's, and broke their way into the house, in order to conclude their revel there; thus affording good reason to judge, that the dismissal of Sir John from the Prince's service was but a feigned stratagem to deceive the public. And hence, they urge, that if ill were done that night, by Sir John Ramorny or his followers, much it is to be thought that the Duke of Rothsay must have at least been privy to, if he did not authorize it."

"Albany, this is dreadful!" said the King; "would they make a murderer of my boy? Would they pretend my David would soil his hands in Scottish blood, without having either provocation or purpose? No, no—they will not invent calumnies so broad as these, for they are flagrant and incredible."

"Pardon, my liege," answered the Duke of Albany; "they say the cause of quarrel which occasioned the riot in Curfew Street, and its consequences, were more proper to the Prince than to Sir John; since none suspects, far less believes, that that hopeful enterprise was conducted for the gratification of the Knight of Ramorny."

"Thou drivest me mad, Robin!" said the King.

"I am dumb," answered his brother; "I did but speak my poor mind according to your royal order."

"Thou meanest well, I know," said the King; "but instead of tearing me to pieces with the display of inevitable calamities, were it not kinder, Robin, to point me out some mode to escape from them?"

"True, my liege; but as the only road of extrication is rough and difficult, it is necessary your Grace should be first possessed with the absolute necessity of using it, ere you hear it even described. The chirurgeon must first convince his patient of the incurable condition of a shattered member, ere he venture to name amputation, though it be the only remedy."

The King at these words was roused to a degree of alarm and indignation, greater than his brother had deemed he could be awakened to.

"Shattered and mortified member, my Lord of Albany! Amputation the only remedy! These are unintelligible words, my lord.

If thou appliest them to our son Rothsay, thou must make them good to the letter, else mayst thou have bitter cause to rue the consequence."

"You construe me too literally, my royal liege," said Albany. "I spoke not of the Prince in such unbeseeming terms; for I call Heaven to witness, that he is dearer to me as the son of a well-beloved brother, than had he been son of my own. But I spoke in regard to separating him from the follies and vanities of life, which holy men say are like to mortified members, and ought, like them, to be cut off and thrown from us, as things which interrupt our progress in better things."

"I understand—thou wouldst have this Ramorny, who hath been thought the instrument of my son's follies, exiled from court," said the relieved monarch, "until these unhappy scandals are forgotten, and our subjects are disposed to look upon our son with different and more confiding eyes."

"That were good counsel, my liege; but mine went a little—a very little—farther. I would have the Prince himself removed for some brief period from court."

"How, Albany! Part with my child, my first-born, the light of my eyes, and—wilful as he is—the darling of my heart? Oh, Robin, I cannot, and I will not!"

"Nay, I did but suggest, my lord—I am sensible of the wound such a proceeding must inflict on a parent's heart, for am I not myself a father?" And he hung his head, as if in hopeless despondency.

"I could not survive it, Albany. When I think that even our own influence over him, which, sometimes forgotten in our absence, is ever effectual whilst he is with us, is by your plan to be entirely removed, what perils might he not rush upon? I could not sleep in his absence—I should hear his death-groan in every breeze; and you, Albany, though you conceal it better, would be nearly as anxious."

Thus spoke the facile monarch, willing to conciliate his brother and cheat himself, by taking it for granted that an affection, of which there were no traces, subsisted betwixt the uncle and nephew.

"Your paternal apprehensions are too easily alarmed, my lord," said Albany. "I do not propose to leave the disposal of the Prince's motions to his own wild pleasure. I understand that the Prince is to be placed for a short time under some becoming restraint—that he should be subjected to the charge of some grave counsellor, who must be responsible both for his conduct and his safety, as a tutor for his pupil."

"How! a tutor? and at Rothsay's age?" exclaimed the King; "he is two years beyond the space to which our laws limit the term of nonage.

"The wiser Romans," said Albany, "extended it for four years after the period we assign; and, in common sense, the right of control ought to last till it be no longer necessary, and so the time ought to

vary with the disposition. Here is young Lindsay, the Earl of Crawford, who they say gives patronage to Ramorny on this appeal. He is a lad of fifteen, with the deep passions and fixed purpose of a man of thirty; while my royal nephew, with much more amiable and noble qualities both of head and heart, sometimes shows, at twenty-three

The Duke of Albany.

years of age, the wanton humours of a boy, towards whom restraint may be kindness. And do not be discouraged that it is so, my liege, or angry with your brother for telling the truth; since the best fruits are those that are slowest in ripening, and the best horses such as give most trouble to the grooms who train them for the field or lists."

The Duke stopped, and after suffering King Robert to indulge for

two or three minutes in a reverie which he did not attempt to interrupt, he added, in a more lively tone,—"But, cheer up, my noble liege; perhaps the feud may be made up without farther fighting or difficulty. The widow is poor, for her husband, though he was much employed, had idle and costly habits. The matter may be therefore redeemed for money, and the amount of an assythment* may be recovered out of Ramorny's estate."

"Nay, that we will ourselves discharge," said King Robert, eagerly catching at the hope of a pacific termination of this unpleasing debate. "Ramorny's prospects will be destroyed by his being sent from court, and deprived of his charge in Rothsay's household; and it would be ungenerous to load a falling man. But here comes our secretary, the Prior, to tell us the hour of council approaches. Good-morrow, my worthy father."

"Benedicite, my royal liege," answered the Abbot.

"Now, good father," continued the King, "without waiting for Rothsay, whose accession to our counsels we will ourselves guarantee, proceed we to the business of our kingdom. What advices have you from the Douglas?"

"He has arrived at his Castle of Tantallon, my liege, and has sent post to say, that though the Earl of March remains in sullen seclusion in his fortress of Dunbar, his friends and followers are gathering and forming an encampment near Coldingham, where it is supposed they intend to await the arrival of a large force of English, which Hotspur and Sir Ralph Percy are assembling on the English frontier."

"That is cold news," said the King; "and may God forgive George of Dunbar!"—The Prince entered as he spoke, and he continued —"Ha! thou art here at length, Rothsay;—I saw thee not at mass."

"I was an idler this morning," said the Prince, "having spent a restless and feverish night."

"Ah, foolish boy!" answered the King; "hadst thou not been over restless on Fastern's Eve, thou hadst not been feverish on the night of Ash Wednesday."

"Let me not interrupt your prayers, my liege," said the Prince lightly. "Your Grace was invoking Heaven in behalf of some one—an enemy doubtless, for these have the frequent advantage of your orisons."

"Sit down and be at peace, foolish youth!" said his father, his eye resting at the same time on the handsome face and graceful figure of his favourite son. Rothsay drew a cushion near to his father's feet, and threw himself carelessly down upon it, while the King resumed.

"I was regretting that the Earl of March, having separated warm from my hand with full assurance that he should receive compensation for every thing which he could complain of as injurious, should have

* A mulct, in atonement for bloodshed, due to the nearest relations of the deceased.

been capable of caballing with Northumberland against his own country—Is it possible he could doubt our intentions to make good our word?"

"I will answer for him, No," said the Prince; "March never doubted your Highness's word. Marry, he may well have made question whether your learned counsellors would leave your Majesty the power of keeping it."

Robert the Third had adopted to a great extent the timid policy of not seeming to hear expressions, which, being heard, required, even in his own eyes, some display of displeasure. He passed on, therefore, in his discourse, without observing his son's speech; but in private, Rothsay's rashness augmented the displeasure which his father began to entertain against him.

"It is well the Douglas is on the marches," said the King. "His breast, like those of his ancestors, has ever been the best bulwark of Scotland."

"Then woe betide us if he should turn his back to the enemy," said the incorrigible Rothsay.

"Dare you impeach the courage of Douglas?" replied the King, extremely chafed.

"No man dare question the Earl's courage," said Rothsay; "it is as certain as his pride. But his luck may be something doubted."

"By St. Andrew, David!" exclaimed his father, "thou art like a screechowl—every word thou sayest betokens strife and calamity."

"I am silent, father," answered the youth.

"And what news of our Highland disturbances?" continued the King, addressing the Prior.

"I trust they have assumed a favourable aspect," answered the clergyman. "The fire which threatened the whole country is likely to be drenched out by the blood of some forty or fifty kerne; for the two great confederacies have agreed, by solemn indenture of arms, to decide their quarrel with such weapons as your Highness may name, and in your royal presence, in such place as shall be appointed, on the 30th of March next to come, being Palm Sunday; the number of combatants being limited to thirty on each side, and the fight to be maintained to extremity, since they affectionately make humble suit and petition to your Majesty, that you will parentally condescend to waive for the day your royal privilege of interrupting the combat, by flinging down of truncheon, or crying of Ho! until the battle shall be utterly fought to an end."

"The wild savages!" exclaimed the King; "would they limit our best and dearest royal privilege, that of putting a stop to strife, and crying truce to battle? Will they remove the only motive which could bring me to the butcherly spectacle of their combat? Would they fight like men, or like their own mountain wolves?"

"My lord," said Albany; "the Earl of Crawford and I had

presumed, without consulting you, to ratify that preliminary, for the adoption of which we saw much and pressing reason."

"How! The Earl of Crawford!" said the King. "Methinks he is a young counsellor on such grave occurrents."

"He is," replied Albany, "notwithstanding his early years, of such esteem among his Highland neighbours, that I could have done little with them but for his aid and influence."

"Hear this, young Rothsay!" said the King reproachfully to his heir.

"I pity Crawford, Sire," replied the Prince. "He has too early lost a father, whose councils would have better become such a season as this."

The King turned next towards Albany with a look of triumph, at the filial affection which his son displayed in his reply.

Albany proceeded without emotion. "It is not the life of these Highlandmen, but their death, which is to be profitable to this commonwealth of Scotland; and truly it seemed to the Earl of Crawford and myself most desirable that the combat should be a strife of extermination."

"Marry," said the Prince, "if such be the juvenile policy of Lindsay, he will be a merciful ruler some ten or twelve years hence! Out upon a boy, that is hard of heart before he has hair upon his lip! Better he had contented himself with fighting cocks on Fastern's Even, than laying schemes for massacring men on Palm Sunday, as if he were backing a Welsh main, where all must fight to death."

"Rothsay is right, Albany," said the King; "it were unlike a Christian monarch to give way in this point. I cannot consent to see men battle until they are all hewn down like cattle in the shambles. It would sicken me to look at it, and the warder would drop from my hand from mere lack of strength to hold it."

"It would drop unheeded," said Albany. "Let me entreat your Grace to recollect, that you only give up a royal privilege, which, exercised, would win you no respect, since it would receive no obedience. Were your Majesty to throw down your warder when the war is high, and these men's blood is hot, it would meet no more regard than if a sparrow should drop among a herd of battling wolves the straw which he was carrying to his nest. Nothing will separate them but the exhaustion of slaughter; and better they sustain it at the hands of each other, than from the swords of such troops as might attempt to separate them at your Majesty's commands. An attempt to keep the peace by violence, would be construed into an ambush laid for them; both parties would unite to resist it,—the slaughter would be the same, and the hoped-for results of future peace would be utterly disappointed."

"There is even too much truth in what you say, brother Robin," replied the flexible King. "To little purpose is it to command what

I cannot enforce; and, although I have the unhappiness to do so each day of my life, it were needless to give such a very public example of royal impotency, before the crowds who may assemble to behold this spectacle. Let these savage men, therefore, work their bloody will to the uttermost upon each other; I will not attempt to forbid what I cannot prevent them from executing. Heaven help this wretched country! I will to my oratory and pray for her, since to aid her by hand and head is alike denied to me. Father Prior, I pray the support of your arm."

"Nay, but, brother," said Albany, "forgive me if I remind you, that we must hear the matter between the citizens of Perth and Ramorny, about the death of a townsman ——"

"True, true," said the Monarch, reseating himself; "more violence —more battle—O Scotland! Scotland! if the best blood of thy bravest children could enrich thy barren soil, what land on earth would excel thee in fertility! When is it that a white hair is seen on the beard of a Scottish man, unless he be some wretch like thy sovereign, protected from murder by impotence, to witness the scenes of slaughter to which he cannot put a period? Let them come in—delay them not. They are in haste to kill, and grudge each other each fresh breath of their Creator's blessed air. The demon of strife and slaughter hath possessed the whole land!"

As the mild Prince threw himself back on his seat, with an air of impatience and anger not very usual with him, the door at the lower end of the room was unclosed, and, advancing from the gallery into which it led, (where in perspective was seen a guard of the Bute-men, or Brandanes, under arms,) came, in mournful procession, the widow of poor Oliver, led by Sir Patrick Charteris, with as much respect as if she had been a lady of the first rank. Behind them came two women of good, the wives of magistrates of the city, both in mourning garments, one bearing the infant, and the other leading the elder child. The Smith followed in his best attire, and wearing over his buff-coat a scarf of crape. Bailie Craigdallie, and a brother magistrate, closed the melancholy procession, exhibiting similar marks of mourning.

The good King's transitory passion was gone the instant he looked on the pallid countenance of the sorrowing widow, and beheld the unconsciousness of the innocent orphans who had sustained so great a loss; and when Sir Patrick Charteris had assisted Magdalen Proudfute to kneel down, and, still holding her hand, kneeled himself on one knee, it was with a sympathetic tone that King Robert asked her name and business. She made no answer, but muttered something, looking towards her conductor.

"Speak for the poor woman, Sir Patrick Charteris," said the King, "and tell us the cause of her seeking our presence."

"So please you, my liege," answered Sir Patrick, rising up, "this woman, and these unhappy orphans, make plaint to your Highness

upon Sir John Ramorny of Ramorny, Knight, that by him, or by some of his household, her umquhile husband, Oliver Proudfute, freeman and burgess of Perth, was slain upon the streets of the city on the Eve of Shrove Tuesday, or morning of Ash Wednesday."

"Woman," replied the King, with much kindness, "thou art gentle by sex, and shouldst be pitiful even by thy affliction; for our own calamity ought to make us—nay, I think it doth make us—merciful to others. Thy husband hath only trodden the path appointed to us all."

"In his case," said the widow, "my liege must remember it has been a brief and a bloody one."

"I agree he hath had foul measure. But since I have been unable to protect him, as I confess was my royal duty, I am willing, in atonement, to support thee and these orphans, as well, or better, than you lived in the days of your husband; only do thou pass from this charge, and be not the occasion of spilling more life. Remember, I put before you the choice betwixt practising mercy and pursuing vengeance, and that betwixt plenty and penury."

"It is true, my liege, we are poor," answered the widow, with unshaken firmness; "but I and my children will feed with the beasts of the field, ere we live on the price of my husband's blood. I demand the combat by my champion, as you are belted knight and crowned King."

"I knew it would be so!" said the King, aside to Albany. "In Scotland, the first words stammered by an infant, and the last uttered by a dying greybeard, are—'combat—blood—revenge.' It skills not arguing further. Admit the defendants."

Sir John Ramorny entered the apartment. He was dressed in a long furred robe, such as men of quality wore when they were unarmed. Concealed by the folds of drapery, his wounded arm was supported by a scarf, or sling of crimson silk, and with the left arm he leaned on a youth, who, scarcely beyond the years of boyhood, bore on his brow the deep impression of early thought, and premature passion. This was that celebrated Lindsay, Earl of Crawford, who, in his afterdays, was known by the epithet of the Tiger Earl,* and who ruled the great and rich valley of Strathmore with the absolute power and unrelenting cruelty of a feudal tyrant. Two or three gentlemen, friends of the Earl, or of his own, countenanced Sir John Ramorny by their presence on this occasion. The charge was again stated, and met by a broad denial on the part of the accused; and in reply, the challengers offered to prove their assertion by an appeal to the ordeal of bier-right.

"I am not bound," answered Sir John Ramorny, "to submit to this ordeal, since I can prove, by the evidence of my late royal master, that I was in my own lodgings, lying on my bed, ill at ease, while this Provost and these Bailies pretend I was committing a crime to which I

* Sir David Lyndsaye, first Earl of Crawford, and brother-in-law to Robert III.

Sir John Ramorny denies the charge brought against his household.

had neither will nor temptation. I can therefore be no just object of suspicion."

"I can aver," said the Prince, "that I saw and conversed with Sir John Ramorny about some matters concerning my own household, on the very night when this murder was a-doing. I therefore know that he was ill at ease, and could not in person commit the deed in question. But I know nothing of the employment of his attendants, and will not take it upon me to say that some one of them may not have been guilty of the crime now charged on them."

Sir John Ramorny had, during the beginning of this speech, looked round with an air of defiance, which was somewhat disconcerted by the concluding sentence of Rothsay's speech. "I thank your Highness," he said, with a smile, "for your cautious and limited testimony in my behalf. He was wise who wrote, 'Put not your faith in Princes.'"

"If you have no other evidence of your innocence, Sir John Ramorny," said the King, "we may not, in respect to your followers, refuse to the injured widow and orphans, the complainers, the grant of a proof by ordeal of bier-right, unless any of them should prefer that of combat. For yourself, you are, by the Prince's evidence, freed from the attaint."

"My liege," answered Sir John, "I can take warrant upon myself for the innocence of my household and followers."

"Why so a monk or a woman might speak," said Sir Patrick Charteris. "In knightly language, wilt thou, Sir John de Ramorny, do battle with me in the behalf of thy followers?"

"The Provost of Perth had not obtained time to name the word combat," said Ramorny, "ere I would have accepted it. But I am not at present fit to hold a lance."

"I am glad of it, under your favour, Sir John; there will be the less bloodshed," said the King. "You must therefore produce your followers according to your steward's household book, in the great church of St. John, that, in presence of all whom it may concern, they may purge themselves of this accusation. See that every man of them do appear at the time of High Mass, otherwise your honour may be sorely tainted."

"They shall attend to a man," said Sir John Ramorny. Then bowing low to the King, he directed himself to the young Duke of Rothsay, and making a deep obeisance, spoke so as to be heard by him alone. "You have used me generously, my lord! One word of your lips could have ended this controversy, and you have refused to speak it!"

"On my life," whispered the Prince, "I spake as far as the extreme verge of truth and conscience would permit. I think thou couldst not expect I should frame lies for thee;—and after all, John, in my broken recollections of that night, I do bethink me of a

butcherly-looking mute, with a curtal-axe, much like such a one as may have done yonder night-job? Ha! have I touched you, Sir Knight?"

Ramorny made no answer, but turned away as precipitately as if some one had pressed suddenly on his wounded arm, and regained his lodgings with the Earl of Crawford; to whom, though disposed for any thing rather than revelry, he was obliged to offer a splendid collation, to acknowledge in some degree his sense of the countenance which the young noble had afforded him.

CHAPTER XXII.

"In pottingry he wrocht great pyne;
He murdreit mony in medecyne."

DUNBAR.

WHEN, after an entertainment the prolonging of which was like torture to the wounded knight, the Earl of Crawford at length took horse, to go to his distant quarters in the Castle of Dupplin, where he resided as a guest, the Knight of Ramorny retired into his sleeping apartment, agonized by pains of body and anxiety of mind. Here he found Henbane Dwining, on whom it was his hard fate to depend for consolation in both respects. The physician, with his affectation of extreme humility, hoped he saw his exalted patient merry and happy.

"Merry as a mad dog!" said Ramorny, "and happy as the wretch whom the cur hath bitten, and who begins to feel the approach of the ravening madness. That ruthless boy, Crawford, saw my agony, and spared not a single carouse. I must do him *justice*, forsooth! If I had done justice to him and to the world, I had thrown him out of window, and cut short a career, which, if he grow up as he has begun, will prove a source of misery to all Scotland, but especially to Tayside. Take heed as thou undoest the ligatures, chirurgeon; the touch of a fly's wing on that raw glowing stump were like a dagger to me."

"Fear not, my noble patron," said the leech, with a chuckling laugh of enjoyment, which he vainly endeavoured to disguise under a tone of affected sensibility. "We will apply some fresh balsam, and—he, he, he!—relieve your knightly honour of the irritation which you sustain so firmly."

"Firmly, man?" said Ramorny, grinning with pain; "I sustain

it as I would the scorching flames of purgatory—the bone seems made of red-hot iron—thy greasy ointment will hiss as it drops upon the wound—And yet it is December's ice, compared to the fever-fit of my mind!"

"We will first use our emollients upon the body, my noble patron," said Dwining; "and then, with your knighthood's permission, your servant will try his art on the troubled mind—though I fain hope even the mental pain also may in some degree depend on the irritation of the wound, and that, abated as I trust the corporeal pangs will soon be, perhaps the stormy feelings of the mind may subside of themselves."

"Henbane Dwining," said the patient, as he felt the pain of his wound assuaged, "thou art a precious and invaluable leech, but some things are beyond thy power. Thou canst stupefy my bodily sense of this raging agony, but thou canst not teach me to bear the scorn of the boy whom I have brought up;—whom I loved, Dwining—for I did love him—dearly love him! The worst of my ill deeds have been to flatter his vices—and he grudged me a word of his mouth, when a word would have allayed this cumber! He smiled, too—I saw him smile, when yon paltry Provost, the companion and patron of wretched burghers, defied me, whom this heartless Prince knew to be unable to bear arms. Ere I forgot or forgive it, thou thyself shalt preach up the pardoning of injuries! And then the care for to-morrow. Think'st thou, Henbane Dwining, that, in very reality, the wounds of the slaughtered corpse will gape, and shed tears of fresh blood at the murderer's approach?"

"I cannot tell, my lord, save by report," said Dwining, "which avouches the fact."

"The brute Bonthron," said Ramorny, "is startled at the apprehension of such a thing, and speaks of being rather willing to stand the combat. What think'st thou?—he is a fellow of steel."

"It is the armourer's trade to deal with steel," replied Dwining.

"Were Bonthron to fall it would little grieve me," said Ramorny; "though I should miss an useful hand."

"I well believe your lordship will not sorrow as for that you lost in Curfew Street—Excuse my pleasantry—he, he, he!—But what are the useful properties of this fellow Bonthron?"

"Those of a bull-bog," answered the Knight; "he worries without barking."

"You have no fear of his confessing?" said the physician.

"Who can tell what the dread of approaching death may do?" replied the patient. "He has already shown a timorousness entirely alien from his ordinary sullenness of nature; he that would scarce wash his hands after he had slain a man, is now afraid to see a dead body bleed."

"Well," said the leech, "I must do something for him if I can,

since it was to further my revenge that he struck yonder downright blow, though by ill luck it lighted not where it was intended."

"And whose fault was that, timid villain," said Ramorny, "save thine own, who marked a rascal deer for a buck of the first head?"

"Benedicite, noble sir," replied the mediciner; "would you have me, who know little save of chamber practice, be as skilful of woodcraft as your noble self, or tell hart from hind, doe from roe, in a glade at midnight? I misdoubted me little when I saw the figure run past us to the Smith's habitation in the Wynd, habited like a morrice-dancer; and yet my mind partly misgave me whether it was our man, for

"'Take heed as thou undoest the ligatures, chirurgeon'" (p. 273).

methought he seemed less of stature. But when he came out again, after so much time as to change his dress, and swaggered onwards with buff-coat and steel-cap, whistling after the armourer's wonted fashion, I do own I was mistaken, *super totam materiem*, and loosed your knighthood's bull-dog upon him, who did his devoir most duly, though he pulled down the wrong deer. Therefore, unless the accursed Smith kill our poor friend stone-dead on the spot, I am determined, if art may do it, that the ban-dog Bonthron shall not miscarry."

"It will put thine art to the test, man of medicine," said Ramorny; "for know, that having the worst of the combat, if our

champion be not killed stone-dead in the lists, he will be drawn forth of them by the heels, and without further ceremony knitted up to the gallows, as convicted of the murder; and when he hath swung there like a loose tassel for an hour or so, I think thou wilt hardly take it in hand to cure his broken neck."

"I am of a different opinion, may it please your knighthood," answered Dwining, gently. "I will carry him off from the very foot of the gallows into the land of faery, like King Arthur, or Sir Huon of Bordeaux, or Ugero the Dane; or I will, if I please, suffer him to dangle on the gibbet for a certain number of minutes, or hours, and then whisk him away from the sight of all, with as much ease as the wind wafts away the withered leaf."

"This is idle boasting, Sir Leech," replied Ramorny. "The whole mob of Perth will attend him to the gallows, each more eager than another to see the retainer of a nobleman die, for the slaughter of a cuckoldly citizen. There will be a thousand of them round the gibbet's foot."

"And were there ten thousand," said Dwining, "shall I, who am a high clerk, and have studied in Spain, and Araby itself, not be able to deceive the eyes of this hoggish herd of citizens, when the pettiest juggler that ever dealt in legerdemain can gull even the sharp observation of your most intelligent knighthood? I tell you, I will put the change on them as if I were in possession of Keddie's ring."

"If thou speakest truth," answered the Knight, "and I think thou darest not palter with me on such a theme, thou must have the aid of Satan, and I will have nought to do with him. I disown and defy him."

Dwining indulged in his internal chuckling laugh when he heard his patron testify his defiance of the foul Fiend, and saw him second it by crossing himself. He composed himself, however, upon observing Ramorny's aspect become very stern, and said, with tolerable gravity, though a little interrupted by the effort necessary to suppress his mirthful mood,—

"Confederacy, most devout sir; confederacy is the soul of jugglery. But—he, he, he!—I have not the honour to be—he, he!—an ally of the gentleman of whom you speak—in whose existence I am—he, he!—no very profound believer, though your knightship, doubtless, hath better opportunities of acquaintance."

"Proceed, rascal, and without that sneer, which thou mayst otherwise dearly pay for."

"I will, most undaunted," replied Dwining. "Know that I have my confederate too, else my skill were little worth."

"And who may that be, pray you?"

"Stephen Smotherwell, if it like your honour, lockman * of this Fair City. I marvel your knighthood knows him not."

* Executioner. So called because one of his dues consisted in taking a small ladleful (Scottice, *lock*) of meal, out of every caskful exposed in the market.

"And I marvel thy knaveship knows him not on professional acquaintance," replied Ramorny; "but I see thy nose is unslit, thy ears yet uncropped, and if thy shoulders are scared or branded, thou art wise for using a high-collared jerkin."

"He, he,! your honour is pleasant," said the mediciner. "It is not by personal circumstances that I have acquired the intimacy of Stephen Smotherwell, but on account of a certain traffic betwixt us, in which, an't please you, I exchange certain sums of silver for the bodies, heads, and limbs, of those who die by aid of friend Stephen."

"Wretch!" exclaimed the Knight with horror, "is it to compose charms and forward works of witchcraft, that you trade for these miserable relics of mortality?"

"He, he, he!—No, an' it please your knighthood," answered the mediciner, much amused with the ignorance of his patron; "but we, who are knights of the scalpel, are accustomed to practise careful carving of the limbs of defunct persons, which we call dissection, whereby we discover, by examination of a dead member, how to deal with one belonging to a living man, which hath become diseased through injury or otherwise. Ah! if your honour saw my poor laboratory, I could show you heads and hands, feet and lungs, which have been long supposed to be rotting in the mould. The skull of Wallace, stolen from London Bridge; the heart of Sir Simon Fraser,* that never feared man; the lovely skull of the fair Katie Logie †—Oh, had I but had the fortune to have preserved the chivalrous hand of mine honoured patron!"

"Out upon thee, slave! Thinkest thou to disgust me with thy catalogue of horrors? Tell me at once where thy discourse drives. How can thy traffic with the hangdog executioner be of avail to serve me, or to help my servant Bonthron?"

"Nay, I do not recommend it to your knighthood, save in an extremity," replied Dwining. "But we will suppose the battle fought, and our cock beaten. Now we must first possess him with the certainty, that, if unable to gain the day, we will at least save him from the hangman, provided he confess nothing which can prejudice your knighthood's honour."

"Ha!—ay, a thought strikes me," said Ramorny. "We can do more than this—we can place a word in Bonthron's mouth that will be troublesome enough to him whom I am bound to curse, for being the cause of my misfortune. Let us to the ban-dog's kennel, and explain to him what is to be done in every view of the question. If we can persuade him to stand the bier-ordeal, it may be a mere bugbear, and in that case we are safe. If he take the combat, he is fierce as a baited bear, and may, perchance, master his opponent; then we are more than safe—we are revenged. If Bonthron himself is vanquished, we will put

* The famous ancestor of the Lovats, slain at Halidon Hill.

† The beautiful mistress of David II.

thy device in exercise; and if thou canst manage it cleanly, we may dictate his confession, take the advantage of it, as I will show thee on further conference, and make a giant stride towards satisfaction for my wrongs. Still there remains one hazard. Suppose our mastiff mortally wounded in the lists, who shall prevent his growling out some species of confession different from what we would recommend?"

"Marry, that can his mediciner," said Dwining. "Let me wait on him, and have the opportunity to lay but a finger on his wound, and trust me he shall betray no confidence."

"Why, there's a willing fiend, that needs neither pushing nor prompting!" said Ramorny.

"As I trust I shall need neither in your knighthood's service."

"We will go indoctrinate our agent," continued the Knight. "We shall find him pliant; for hound as he is, he knows those who feed him from those who browbeat him; and he holds a late royal master of mine in deep hate for some injurious treatment and base terms which he received at his hand. I must also farther concert with thee the particulars of thy practice, for saving the ban-dog from the hands of the herd of citizens."

We leave this worthy pair of friends to their secret practices, of which we shall afterwards see the results. They were, although of different qualities, as well matched for device and execution of criminal projects, as the greyhound is to destroy the game which the slowhound raises, or the slowhound to track the prey which the gazehound discovers by the eye. Pride and selfishness were the characteristics of both; but from the difference of rank, education, and talents, they had assumed the most different appearance in the two individuals.

Nothing could less resemble the high-blown ambition of the favourite courtier, the successful gallant, and the bold warrior, than the submissive unassuming mediciner, who seemed even to court and delight in insult; whilst, in his secret soul, he felt himself possessed of a superority of knowledge,—a power, both of science and of mind, which placed the rude nobles of the day infinitely beneath him. So conscious was Henbane Dwining of this elevation, that, like a keeper of wild beasts, he sometimes adventured, for his own amusement, to rouse the stormy passions of such men as Ramorny, trusting, with his humble manner, to elude the turmoil he had excited, as an Indian boy will launch his light canoe, secure from its very fragility, upon a broken surf, in which the boat of an argosy would be assuredly dashed to pieces. That the feudal baron should despise the humble practitioner in medicine, was a matter of course; but Ramorny felt not the less the influence which Dwining exercised over him, and was in the encounter of their wits oftened mastered by him, as the most eccentric efforts of a fiery horse are overcome by a boy of twelve years old, if he has been bred to the arts of the manege. But the contempt of Dwining for Ramorny was far less qualified. He regarded the Knight,

in comparison with himself, as scarcely rising above the brute creation; capable indeed of working destruction, as the bull with his horns, or the wolf with his fangs, but mastered by mean prejudices, and a slave to priestcraft, in which phrase Dwining included religion of every kind. On the whole, he considered Ramorny as one whom nature had

Henbane Dwining's secret hoard.

assigned to him as a serf, to mine for the gold which he worshipped, and the avaricious love of which was his greatest failing, though by no means his worst vice. He vindicated this sordid tendency in his own eyes, by persuading himself that it had its source in the love of power.

"Henbane Dwining," he said, as he gazed in delight upon the

hoards which he had secretly amassed, and which he visited from time to time, "is no silly miser, that doats on those pieces for their golden lustre; it is the power with which they endow the possessor, which makes him thus adore them. What is there that these put not within your command? Do you love beauty, and are mean, deformed, infirm, and old?—here is a lure the fairest hawk of them all will stoop to. Are you feeble, weak, subject to the oppression of the powerful?—here is that will arm in your defence those more mighty than the petty tyrant whom you fear. Are you splendid in your wishes, and desire the outward show of opulence?—this dark chest contains many a wide range of hill and dale, many a fair forest full of game; the allegiance of a thousand vassals. Wish you for favour in courts, temporal or spiritual?—the smiles of kings, the pardon of popes and priests for old crimes, and the indulgence which encourages priest-ridden fools to venture on new ones,—all these holy incentives to vice may be purchased for gold. Revenge itself, which the gods are said to reserve to themselves, doubtless because they envy humanity so sweet a morsel—revenge itself is to be bought by it. But it is also to be won by superior skill, and that is the nobler mode of reaching it. I will spare, then, my treasure for other uses, and accomplish my revenge gratis; or rather I will add the luxury of augumented wealth to the triumph of requited wrongs."

Thus thought Dwining, as, returned from his visit to Sir John Ramorny, he added the gold he had received for his various services to the mass of treasure; and having gloated over the whole for a minute or two, turned the key on his concealed treasure-house, and walked forth on his visits to his patients, yielding the wall to every man whom he met, and bowing and doffing his bonnet to the poorest burgher that owned a petty booth, nay, to the artificers who gained their precarious bread by the labour of their welked hands.

"Caitiffs," was the thought of his heart, while he did such obeisance, "base, sodden-witted mechanics! did you know what this key could disclose, what foul weather from Heaven would prevent your unbonneting? What putrid kennel in your wretched hamlet, would be disgusting enough to make you scruple to fall down and worship the owner of such wealth? But I will make you feel my power, though it suits my humour to hide the source of it. I will be an incubus to your city, since you have rejected me as a magistrate. Like the nightmare, I will hag-ride ye, yet remain invisible myself. This miserable Ramorny too, he who, in losing his hand, has, like a poor artisan, lost the only valuable part of his frame, *he* heaps insulting language on me, as if anything which *he* can say had power to chafe a constant mind like mine! Yet while he calls me rogue, villain, and slave, he acts as wisely as if he should amuse himself by pulling hairs out of my head, while my hand had hold of his heart-strings. Every insult I can pay back instantly by a pang of bodily pain or mental agony—and—he!

he!—I run no long accounts with his knighthood, that must be allowed."

While the mediciner was thus indulging his diabolical musing, and passing, in his creeping manner, along the street, the cry of females was heard behind him.

"Ay, there he is, Our Lady be praised!—there is the most helpful man in Perth," said one voice.

"They may speak of knights and kings for redressing wrongs, as they call it—but give me worthy Master Dwining the pottercarrier, cummers," replied another.

At the same moment, the leech was surrounded, and taken hold of by the speakers, good women of the Fair City.

"How now—what's the matter?" said Dwining, "whose cow has calved?"

"There is no calving in the case," said one of the women, "but a poor fatherless wean dying; so come awa' wi' you, for our trust is constant in you, as Bruce said to Donald of the Isles."

"*Opiferque per orbem dicor*," said Henbane Dwining. "What is the child dying of?"

"The croup—the croup," screamed one of the gossips; "the innocent is rouping like a corbie."

"*Cynanche trachealis*—that disease makes brief work. Show me the house instantly," continued the mediciner, who was in the habit of exercising his profession liberally, notwithstanding his natural avarice, and humanely, in spite of his natural malignity. As we can suspect him of no better principle, his motive most probably may have been vanity and the love of his art.

He would nevertheless have declined giving his attendance in the present case, had he known whither the kind gossips were conducting him, in time sufficient to frame an apology. But ere he guessed where he was going, the leech was hurried into the house of the late Oliver Proudfute, from which he heard the chant of the women, as they swathed and dressed the corpse of the umquhile Bonnet-maker, for the ceremony of next morning; of which chant, the following verses may be received as a modern imitation,—

"Viewless Essence, thin and bare,
Wellnigh melted into air;
Still with fondness hovering near
The earthly form thou once didst wear;

"Pause upon thy pinion's flight,
Be thy course to left or right;
Be thou doom'd to soar or sink,
Pause upon the awful brink.

"To avenge the deed expelling
Thee untimely from thy dwelling,
Mystic force thou shalt retain
O'er the blood and o'er the brain.

"When the form thou shalt espy
That darken'd on thy closing eye;
When the footstep thou shalt hear,
That thrill'd upon thy dying ear;

"Then strange sympathies shall wake,
The flesh shall thrill, the nerves shall quake:
The wounds renew their clotter'd flood,
And every drop cry blood for blood!"

Hardened as he was, the physician felt reluctant to pass the threshold of the man to whose death he had been so directly, though, so far as the individual was concerned, mistakingly accessory.

"Let me pass on, women," he said, "my art can only help the living—the dead are past our power."

"Nay, but your patient is upstairs—the youngest orphan——"

Dwining was compelled to go into the house. But he was surprised, when, the instant he stepped over the threshold, the gossips, who were busied with the dead body, stinted suddenly in their song, while one said to the others,—

"In God's name, who entered? That was a large gout of blood!"

"Not so," said another voice, "it is a drop of the liquid balm."

"Nay, cummer, it was blood. Again I say, who entered the house even now?"

One looked out from the apartment into the little entrance, where Dwining, under pretence of not distinctly seeing the trap-ladder by which he was to ascend into the upper part of this house of lamentation, was delaying his progress purposely, disconcerted with what had reached him of the conversation.

"Nay, it is only worthy Master Henbane Dwining," answered one of the sibyls.

"Only Master Dwining?" replied the one who had first spoken, in a tone of acquiescence; "our best helper in need? Then it must have been balm sure enough."

"Nay," said the other, "it may have been blood nevertheless—for the leech, look you, when the body was found, was commanded by the magistrates to probe the wound with his instruments, and how could the poor dead corpse know that that was done with good purpose?"

"Ay, truly, cummer; and as poor gossip Oliver often mistook friends for enemies while he was in life, his judgment cannot be thought to have mended now."

Dwining heard no more, being now forced up stairs into a species of garret, where Magdalen sat on her widowed bed, clasping to her bosom her infant, which, already black in the face, and uttering the gasping crowing sound, which gives the popular name to the complaint, seemed on the point of rendering up its brief existence. A Dominican monk sat near the bed, holding the other child in his arms, and seem-

ing from time to time to speak a word or two of spiritual consolation, or intermingle some observation on the child's disorder.

The mediciner cast upon the good father a single glance, filled with that ineffable disdain which men of science entertain against interlopers. His own aid was instant and efficacious; he snatched the child from the despairing mother, stripped its throat, and opened a vein, which, as it bled freely, relieved the little patient instantaneously. In a brief space every dangerous symptom disappeared, and Dwining, having bound up the vein, replaced the infant in the arms of the half distracted mother.

Gratitude of the widow Proudfute.

The poor woman's distress for her husband's loss, which had been suspended during the extremity of the child's danger, now returned on Magdalen with the force of an augmented torrent, which has borne down the dam-dike that for a while interrupted its waves.

"Oh, learned sir," she said, "you see a poor woman of her that you once knew a richer. But the hands that restored this bairn to my arms must not leave this house empty. Generous, kind Master Dwining, accept of his beads—they are made of ebony and silver—he aye liked to have his things as handsome as any gentleman—and liker he was in all his ways to a gentleman than any one of his standing, and even so came of it."

With these words, in a mute passion of grief she pressed to her

breast and to her lips the chaplet of her deceased husband, and proceeded to thrust it into Dwining's hands.

"Take it," she said, "for the love of one who loved you well. Ah! he used ever to say, if ever man could be brought back from the brink of the grave, it must be by Master Dwining's guidance. And his ain bairn is brought back this blessed day, and he is lying there stark and stiff, and kens naething of its health and sickness! O, woe is me, and wala wa!—But take the beads, and think on his puir soul, as you put them through your fingers; he will be freed from purgatory the sooner that good people pray to assoilzie him."

"Take back your beads, cummer—I know no legerdemain—can do no conjuring tricks," said the mediciner, who, more moved than perhaps his rugged nature had anticipated, endeavoured to avoid receiving the ill-omened gift. But his last words gave offence to the churchman, whose presence he had not recollected when he uttered them.

"How now, Sir Leech!" said the Dominican: "do you call prayers for the dead juggling tricks? I know that Chaucer, the English Maker, says of you mediciners, that your study is but little on the Bible. Our mother, the Church, hath nodded of late, but her eyes are now opened to discern friends from foes; and be well assured——"

"Nay, reverend father," said Dwining, "you take me at too great advantage. I said I could do no miracles, and was about to add, that as the church certainly could work such conclusions, those rich beads should be deposited in your hands, to be applied as they may best benefit the soul of the deceased."

He dropped the beads into the Dominican's hand, and escaped from the house of mourning.

"This was a strangely timed visit," he said to himself, when he got safe out of doors. "I hold such things cheap as any can; yet, though it is but a silly fancy, I am glad I saved the squalling child's life. But I must to my friend Smotherwell, whom I have no doubt to bring to my purpose in the matter of Bonthron; and thus on this occasion I shall save two lives, and have destroyed only one."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Lo! where he lies embalmed in gore,
His wound to Heaven cries;
The floodgates of his blood implore
For vengeance from the skies."

URANUS AND PSYCHE.

THE High Church of St. John in Perth, being that of the patron saint of the burgh, had been selected by the magistrates as that in which the community was likely to have most fair play for the display of the ordeal. The churches and convents of the Dominicans, Carthusians and others of the regular clergy, had been highly endowed by the king and nobles, and therefore it was the universal cry of the city-council, that "their ain good auld St. John," of whose good graces they thought themselves sure, ought to be fully confided in, and preferred to the new patrons, for whom the Dominicans, Carthusians, Carmelites, and others, had founded newer seats around the Fair City. The disputes between the regular and secular clergy added to the jealousy which dictated this choice of the spot in which Heaven was to display a species of miracle, upon a direct appeal to the divine decision in a case of doubtful guilt; and the town-clerk was as anxious that the church of St. John should be preferred, as if there had been a faction in the body of saints for and against the interests of the beautiful town of Perth.

Many, therefore, were the petty intrigues entered into and disconcerted, for the purpose of fixing on the church. But the magistrates, considering it as a matter touching in a close degree the honour of the city, determined, with judicious confidence in the justice and impartiality of their patron, to confide the issue to the influence of St. John.

It was, therefore, after high mass had been performed, with the

greatest solemnity of which circumstances rendered the ceremony capable, and after the most repeated and fervent prayers had been offered to Heaven by the crowded assembly, that preparations were made for appealing to the direct judgment of Heaven on the mysterious murder of the unfortunate Bonnet-maker.

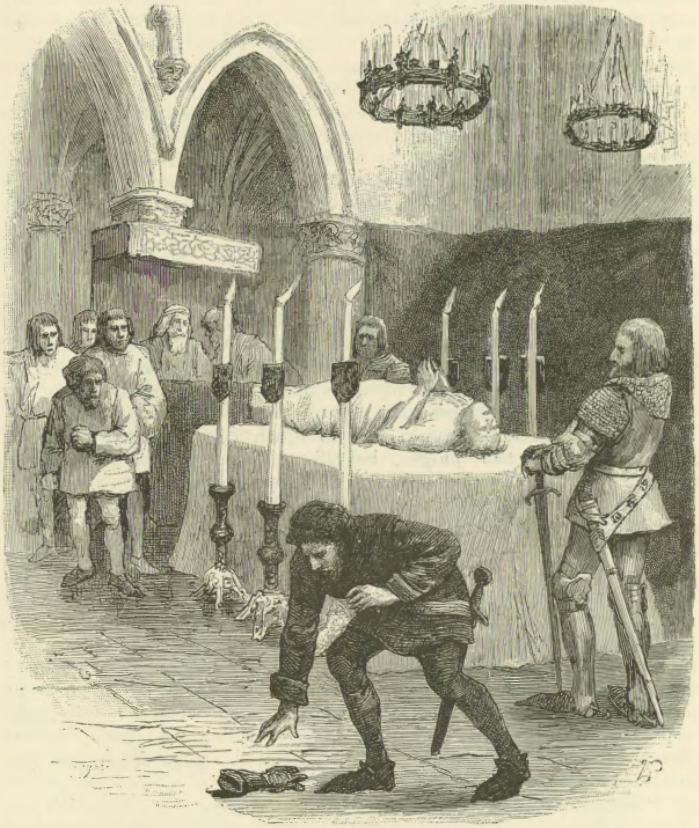
The scene presented that effect of imposing solemnity, which the rites of the Catholic church are so well qualified to produce. The eastern window, richly and variously painted, streamed down a torrent of chequered light upon the high altar. On the bier placed before it were stretched the mortal remains of the murdered man, his arms folded on his breast, and his palms joined together, with the fingers pointed upwards, as if the senseless clay was itself appealing to Heaven for vengeance against those who had violently divorced the immortal spirit from its mangled tenement.

Close to the bier was placed the throne, which supported Robert of Scotland, and his brother Albany. The Prince sat upon a lower stool, beside his father; an arrangement which occasioned some observation, as Albany's seat being little distinguished from that of the King, the heir-apparent, though of full age, seemed to be degraded beneath his uncle in the sight of the assembled people of Perth. The bier was so placed, as to leave the view of the body it sustained open to the greater part of the multitude assembled in the church.

At the head of the bier stood the Knight of Kinfauns, the challenger, and at the foot the young Earl of Crawford, as representing the defendant. The evidence of the Duke of Rothsay in expurgation, as it was termed, of Sir John Ramorny, had exempted him from the necessity of attendance as a party subjected to the ordeal; and his illness served as a reason for his remaining at home. His household, including those who, though immediately in waiting upon Sir John, were accounted the Prince's domestics, and had not yet received their dismissal, amounted to eight or ten persons, most of them esteemed men of profligate habits, and who might therefore be deemed capable, in the riot of a festival evening, of committing the slaughter of the Bonnet-maker. They were drawn up in a row on the left side of the church, and wore a species of white cassock, resembling the dress of a penitentiary. All eyes being bent on them, several of this band seemed so much disconcerted, as to excite among the spectators strong prepossessions of their guilt. The real murderer had a countenance incapable of betraying him,—a sullen, dark look, which neither the feast nor wine-cup could enliven, and which the peril and discovery and death could not render dejected.

We have already noticed the posture of the dead body. The face was bare, as were the breast and arms. The rest of the corpse was shrouded in a winding-sheet of the finest linen, so that, if blood should flow from any place which was covered, it could not fail to be instantly manifest.

High mass having been performed, followed by a solemn invocation to the Deity, that He would be pleased to protect the innocent, and make known the guilty, Eviot, Sir John Ramorny's page, was summoned



Henry Gow accepts Bonthron's gage of battle.

to undergo the ordeal.* He advanced with an ill-assured step. Perhaps he thought his internal consciousness that Bonthron must have been the assassin, might be sufficient to implicate him in the murder,

* Note XIV. Ordeal by Fire.

though he was not directly accessory to it. He paused before the bier; and his voice faltered, as he swore by all that was created in seven days and seven nights, by heaven, by hell, by his part of paradise, and by the God and Author of all, that he was free and sackless of the bloody deed done upon the corpse before which he stood, and on whose breast he made the sign of the cross, in evidence of the appeal. No consequences ensued. The body remained stiff as before; the curdled wounds gave no sign of blood.

The citizens looked on each other with faces of blank disappointment. They had persuaded themselves of Eviot's guilt; and their suspicions had been confirmed by his irresolute manner. Their surprise at his escape was therefore extreme. The other followers of Ramorny took heart, and advanced to take the oath, with a boldness which increased, as one by one they performed the ordeal, and were declared, by the voice of the judges, free and innocent of every suspicion attaching to them on account of the death of Oliver Proudfute.

But there was one individual who did not partake that increasing confidence. The name of "Bonthron—Bonthron!" sounded three times through the aisles of the church; but he who owned it acknowledged the call no otherwise than by a sort of shuffling motion with his feet, as if he had been suddenly affected with a fit of the palsy.

"Speak, dog," whispered Eviot, "or prepare for a dog's death!"

But the murderer's brain was so much disturbed by the sight before him, that the judges, beholding his deportment, doubted whether to ordain him to be dragged before the bier, or to pronounce judgment in default; and it was not, until he was asked for the last time, whether he would submit to the ordeal, that he answered, with his usual brevity,—

"I will not;—what do I know what juggling tricks may be practised to take a poor man's life? I offer the combat to any man who says I harmed that dead body."

And, according to usual form, he threw his glove upon the floor of the church.

Henry Smith stepped forward, amidst the murmured applauses of his fellow-citizens, which even the august presence could not entirely suppress; and lifting the ruffian's glove, which he placed in his bonnet, laid down his own in the usual form, as a gage of battle. But Bonthron raised it not.

"He is no match for me," growled the savage, "nor fit to lift my glove. I follow the Prince of Scotland, in attending on his Master of Horse. This fellow is a wretched mechanic."

Here the Prince interrupted him. "Thou follow *me*, caitiff! I discharge thee from my service on the spot. Take him in hand, Smith, and beat him as thou didst never thump anvil! The villain is both guilty and recreant. It sickens me even to look at him; and if my royal father will be ruled by me, he will give the parties two handsome

Scottish axes, and we will see which of them turns out the best fellow before the day is half an hour older."

This was readily assented to by the Earl of Crawford and Sir Patrick Charteris, the godfathers of the parties, who, as the combatants were men of inferior rank, agreed that they should fight in steel caps, buff jackets, and with axes; and that as soon as they could be prepared for the combat.

The lists were appointed in the Skinners' Yards,* a neighbouring space of ground, occupied by the corporation from which it had the name, and who quickly cleared a space of about thirty feet by twenty-five, for the combatants. Thither thronged the nobles, priests, and commons,—all excepting the old King, who, detesting such scenes of blood, retired to his residence, and devolved the charge of the field upon the Earl of Errol, Lord High Constable, to whose office it more particularly belonged. The Duke of Albany watched the whole proceeding with a close and wary eye. His nephew gave the scene the heedless degree of notice which corresponded with his character.

When the combatants appeared in the lists, nothing could be more striking than the contrast betwixt the manly, cheerful countenance of the Smith, whose sparkling bright eye seemed already beaming with the victory he hoped for, and the sullen, downcast aspect of the brutal Bonthron, who looked as if he were some obscene bird, driven into sunshine out of the shelter of its darksome haunts. They made oath severally, each to the truth of his quarrel; a ceremony which Henry Gow performed with serene and manly confidence—Bonthron with a dogged resolution, which induced the Duke of Rothsay to say to the High Constable, "Didst thou ever, my dear Errol, behold such a mixture of malignity, cruelty, and I think fear, as in that fellow's countenance?"

"He is not comely," said the Earl, "but a powerful knave as I have seen."

"I'll gage a hogshead of wine with you, my good lord, that he loses the day. Henry the armourer is as strong as he, and much more active. And then look at his bold bearing! There is something in that other fellow that is loathsome to look upon. Let them yoke presently, my dear Constable, for I am sick of beholding him."

The High Constable then addressed the widow, who, in her deep weeds, and having her children still beside her, occupied a chair within the lists,—"Woman, do you willingly accept of this man, Henry the Smith, to do battle as your champion in this cause?"

"I do—I do, most willingly," answered Magdalen Proudfute; "and may the blessing of God and St. John give him strength and fortune, since he strikes for the orphan and fatherless!"

"Then I pronounce this a fenced field of battle," said the Constable aloud. "Let no one dare, upon peril of his life, to interrupt this

* Note XV. Skinners' Yards.

combat by word, speech, or look. Sound trumpets, and fight, combatants!"

The trumpets flourished, and the combatants, advancing from the opposite ends of the lists, with a steady and even pace, looked at each other attentively, well skilled in judging from the motion of the eye, the direction in which a blow was meditated. They halted opposite to, and within reach of, each other, and in turn made more than one feint to strike, in order to ascertain the activity and vigilance of the opponent. At length, whether weary of these manœuvres, or fearing lest in a contest so conducted, his unwieldy strength would be foiled by the activity of the Smith, Bonthron heaved up his axe for a downright blow, adding the whole strength of his sturdy arms to the weight of the weapon in its descent. The Smith, however, avoided the stroke by stepping aside; for it was too forcible to be controlled by any guard which he could have interposed. Ere Bonthron recovered guard, Henry struck him a sideling blow on the steel head-piece, which prostrated him on the ground.

"Confess, or die," said the victor, placing his foot on the body of the vanquished, and holding to his throat the point of the axe, which terminated in a spike or poniard.

"I will confess," said the villain, glaring wildly upward on the sky. "Let me rise."

"Not till you have yielded," said Harry Smith.

"I do yield," again murmured Bonthron, and Henry proclaimed aloud that his antagonist was defeated.

The Dukes of Rothsay and Albany, the High Constable, and the Dominican Prior, now entered the lists, and addressing Bonthron, demanded if he acknowledged himself vanquished.

"I do," answered the miscreant.

"And guilty of the murder of Oliver Proudfute?"

"I am—but I mistook him for another."

"And whom didst thou intend to slay?" said the Prior. "Confess, my son, and merit thy pardon in another world; for with this thou hast little more to do."

"I took the slain man," answered the discomfited combatant, 'for him whose hand has struck me down, whose foot now presses me."

"Blessed be the saints!" said the Prior; "now all those who doubt the virtue of the holy ordeal, may have their eyes opened to their error. Lo! he is trapped in the snare which he laid for the guiltless."

"I scarce ever saw the man before," said the Smith. "I never did wrong to him or his. Ask him, an' it please your reverence, why he should have thought of slaying me treacherously."

"It is a fitting question," answered the Prior. "Give glory where it is due, my son, even though it is manifested by thy shame. For

The High Constable prevents the Prince from killing Bouthron.

what reason wouldst thou have waylaid this armourer, who says he never wronged thee?"

"He had wronged him whom I served," answered Bonthron; "and I meditated the deed by his command."

"By whose command?" asked the Prior.

Bonthron was silent for an instant, then growled out,—"He is too mighty for me to name."

"Hearken, my son," said the churchman; "tarry but a brief hour, and the mighty and the mean of this earth shall to thee alike be empty sounds. The sledge is even now preparing to drag thee to the place of execution. Therefore, son, once more I charge thee to consult thy soul's weal by glorifying Heaven, and speaking the truth. Was it thy master, Sir John Ramorny, that stirred thee to so foul a deed?"

"No," answered the prostrate villain, "it was a greater than he." And at the same time he pointed with his finger to the Prince.

"Wretch!" said the astonished Duke of Rothsay; "do you dare to hint that *I* was your instigator?"

"You yourself, my lord," answered the unblushing ruffian.

"Die in thy falsehood, accursed slave!" said the Prince; and, drawing his sword, he would have pierced his calumniator, had not the Lord High Constable interposed with word and action.

"Your Grace must forgive my discharging mine office—this caitiff must be delivered into the hands of the executioner. He is unfit to be dealt with by any other, much less by your Highness."

"What! noble Earl," said Albany, aloud, and with much real or affected emotion, "would you let the dog pass alive from hence, to poison the people's ears with false accusations against the Prince of Scotland? I say, cut him to mammocks upon the spot!"

"Your Highness will pardon me," said the Earl of Errol; "I must protect him till his doom is executed."

"Then let him be gagged instantly," said Albany. "And you, my royal nephew, why stand you there fixed in astonishment? Call your resolution up—speak to the prisoner—swear—protest by all that is sacred that you knew not of this felon deed. See how the people look on each other, and whisper apart! My life on't that this lie spreads faster than any gospel truth. Speak to them, royal kinsman, no matter what you say, so you be constant in denial."

"What, sir," said Rothsay, starting from his pause of surprise and mortification, and turning haughtily towards his uncle; "would you have me gage my royal word against that of an abject recreant? Let those who *can* believe the son of their sovereign, the descendant of Bruce, capable of laying ambush for the life of a poor mechanic, enjoy the pleasure of thinking the villain's tale true."

"That will not I for one," said the Smith, bluntly. "I never did aught but what was in honour towards his royal Grace the Duke of

Rothsay, and never received unkindness from him, in word, look, or deed; and I cannot think he would have given aim to such base practice."

"Was it in honour that you threw his Highness from the ladder in Curfew Street, upon Fastern's Even?" said Bonthron; "or think you the favour was received kindly or unkindly?"

This was so boldly said, and seemed so plausible, that it shook the Smith's opinion of the Prince's innocence.

"Alas, my lord," said he, looking sorrowfully towards Rothsay, "could your Highness seek an innocent fellow's life for doing his duty by a helpless maiden? I would rather have died in these lists, than live to hear it said of the Bruce's heir!"

"Thou art a good fellow, Smith," said the Prince; "but I cannot expect thee to judge more wisely than others. Away with that convict to the gallows, and gibbet him alive an' you will, that he may speak falsehood and spread scandal on us to the last prolonged moment of his existence!"

So saying, the Prince turned away from the lists, disdaining to notice the gloomy looks cast towards him, as the crowd made slow and reluctant way for him to pass, and expressing neither surprise nor displeasure at a deep hollow murmur, or groan, which accompanied his retreat. Only a few of his own immediate followers attended him from the field, though various persons of distinction had come there in his train. Even the lower class of citizens ceased to follow the unhappy Prince, whose former indifferent reputation had exposed him to so many charges of impropriety and levity, and around whom there seemed now darkening suspicions of the most atrocious nature.

He took his slow and thoughtful way to the church of the Dominicans; but the ill news, which fly proverbially fast, had reached his father's place of retirement, before he himself appeared. On entering the palace and enquiring for the King, the Duke of Rothsay was surprised to be informed that he was in deep consultation with the Duke of Albany, who, mounting on horseback as the Prince left the lists, had reached the convent before him. He was about to use the privilege of his rank and birth, to enter the royal apartment, when MacLewis, the commander of the guard of Brandanes, gave him to understand, in the most respectful terms, that he had special instructions which forbade his admittance.

"Go at least, MacLewis, and let them know that I wait their pleasure," said the Prince. "If my uncle desires to have the credit of shutting the father's apartment against the son, it will gratify him to know that I am attending in the outer hall like a lackey."

"May it please you," said MacLewis, with hesitation, "if your Highness would consent to retire just now, and to wait a while in patience, I will send to acquaint you when the Duke of Albany goes; and I doubt not that his Majesty will then admit your Grace to his

presence. At present, your Highness must forgive me,—it is impossible you can have access."

"I understand you, MacLewis; but go, nevertheless, and obey my commands."

The officer went accordingly, and returned with a message, that the King was indisposed, and on the point of retiring to his private chamber; but that the Duke of Albany would presently wait upon the Prince of Scotland.

It was, however, a full half hour ere the Duke of Albany appeared, —a period of time which Rothsay spent partly in moody silence, and partly in idle talk with MacLewis and the Brandanes, as the levity or irratibility of his temper obtained the ascendant.

At length the Duke came, and with him the Lord High Constable, whose countenance expressed much sorrow and embarrassment.

"Fair kinsman," said the Duke of Albany, "I grieve to say that it is my royal brother's opinion, that it will be best, for the honour of the royal family, that your Royal Highness do restrict yourself for a time to the seclusion of the High Constable's lodgings,* and accept of the noble Earl here present for your principal, if not sole, companion until the scandals which have been this day spread abroad, shall be refuted, or forgotten."

"How is this, my Lord of Errol?" said the Prince, in astonishment. "Is your house to be my jail, and is your lordship to be my jailer?"

"The saints forbid, my lord," said the Earl of Errol; "but it is my unhappy duty to obey the commands of your father, by considering your Royal Highness for some time as being under my ward."

"The Prince—the heir of Scotland, under the ward of the High Constable! What reason can be given for this? Is the blighting speech of a convicted recreant of strength sufficient to tarnish my royal escutcheon?"

"While such accusations are not refuted and denied, my kinsman," said the Duke of Albany, "they will contaminate that of a monarch."

"Denied, my lord!" exclaimed the Prince; "by whom are they asserted? save by a wretch too infamous, even by his own confession, to be credited for a moment, though a beggar's character, not a prince's, were impeached. Fetch him hither,—let the rack be shown to him; you will soon hear him retract the calumny which he dared to assert."

"The gibbet has done its work too surely to leave Bonthron sensible to the rack," said the Duke of Albany. "He has been executed an hour since."

"And why such haste, my lord?" said the Prince; "know you it looks as if there were practice in it, to bring a stain on my name?"

"The custom is universal—the defeated combatant in the ordeal of battle is instantly transferred from the lists to the gallows. And yet, fair kinsman," continued the Duke of Albany, "if you had boldly and

* Note XVI. Earl of Errol's lodgings.

strongly denied the imputation, I would have judged right to keep the wretch alive for further investigation; but as your Highness was silent, I deemed it best to stifle the scandal in the breath of him that uttered it."

"St. Mary, my lord, but this is too insulting! Do you, my uncle and kinsman, suppose me guilty of prompting such an useless and unworthy action, as that which the slave confessed?"

"It is not for me to bandy question with your Highness; otherwise I would ask, whether you also mean to deny the scarce less unworthy, though less bloody, attack upon the house in Couvrefew Street? Be not angry with me, kinsman; but, indeed, your sequestering yourself for some brief space from the court, were it only during the King's residence in this city, where so much offence has been given, is imperiously demanded."

Rothsay paused when he heard this exhortation; and looking at the Duke in a very marked manner, replied,—

"Uncle, you are a good huntsman. You have pitched your toils with much skill; but you would have been foiled, notwithstanding, had not the stag rushed among the nets of free-will. God speed you, and may you have the profit by this matter which your measures deserve. Say to my father, I obey his arrest. My Lord High Constable, I wait only your pleasure to attend you to your lodgings. Since I am to lie in ward, I could not have desired a kinder or more courteous warden."

The interview between the uncle and nephew being thus concluded, the Prince retired with the Earl of Errol to his apartments; the citizens whom they met in the streets passing to the further side, when they observed the Duke of Rothsay, to escape the necessity of saluting one whom they had been taught to consider as a ferocious as well as unprincipled libertine. The constable's lodgings received the owner and his princely guest, both glad to leave the streets, yet neither feeling easy in the situation which they occupied with regard to each other within doors.

We must return to the lists after the combat had ceased, and when the nobles had withdrawn. The crowds were now separated into two distinct bodies. That which made the smallest in number, was at the same time the most distinguished for respectability, consisting of the better class of inhabitants of Perth, who were congratulating the successful champion, and each other, upon the triumphant conclusion to which they had brought their feud with the courtiers. The magistrates were so much elated on the occasion, that they entreated Sir Patrick Charteris's acceptance of a collation in the Town-hall. To this, Henry, the hero of the day, was of course invited, or he was rather commanded to attend. He listened to the summons with great embarrassment, for it may be readily believed his heart was with Catharine Glover. But the advice of his father Simon decided him. That veteran citizen had a natural and becoming deference for the

magistracy of the Fair City; he entertained a high estimation of all honours which flowed from such a source, and thought that his intended son-in-law would do wrong not to receive them with gratitude.

"Thou must not think to absent thyself from such a solemn occasion, son Henry," was his advice. "Sir Patrick Charteris is to be there himself, and I think it will be a rare occasion for thee to gain his good-will. It is like he may order of thee a new suit of harness; and I myself heard worthy Bailie Craigdallie say, there was a talk of furbishing up the city's armoury. Thou must not neglect the good trade, now that thou takest on thee an expensive family."

"Tush, father Glover," answered the embarrassed victor, "I lack no custom—and thou knowest there is Catharine, who may wonder at my absence, and have her ear abused once more by tales of glee-maidens, and I wot not what."

"Fear not for that," said the Glover, "but go, like an obedient burgess, where thy betters desire to have thee. I do not deny that it will cost thee some trouble to make thy peace with Catharine about this duel; for she thinks herself wiser in such matters than King and Council, Kirk and Canons, Provost and Bailies. But I will take up the quarrel with her myself, and will so work for thee, that though she may receive thee to-morrow with somewhat of a chiding, it shall melt into tears and smiles, like an April morning, that begins with a mild shower. Away with thee then, my son, and be constant to the time, to-morrow morning after mass."

The Smith, though reluctantly, was obliged to defer to the reasoning of his proposed father-in-law, and, once determined to accept the honour destined for him by the fathers of the city, he extricated himself from the crowd, and hastened home to put on his best apparel; in which he presently afterwards repaired to the Council-house, where the ponderous oak table seemed to bend under the massy dishes of choice Tay salmon, and delicious sea-fish from Dundee, being the dainties which the fasting season permitted, whilst neither wine, ale, nor metheglin were wanting to wash them down. The waits, or minstrels of the burgh, played during the repast, and in the intervals of the music, one of them recited with great emphasis, a long poetical account of the battle of Blackearn-side, fought by Sir William Wallace, and his redoubted captain and friend, Thomas of Longueville, against the English general, Seward—a theme perfectly familiar to all the guests, who, nevertheless, more tolerant than their descendants, listened as if it had all the zest of novelty. It was complimentary to the ancestor of the Knight of Kinfauns doubtless, and to other Perthshire families, in passages which the audience applauded vociferously, whilst they pledged each other in mighty draughts, to the memory of the heroes who had fought by the side of the Champion of Scotland. The health of Henry Wynd was quaffed with repeated shouts, and the Provost announced publicly that the magistrates were consulting how they might best invest him with

some distinguished privilege, or honorary reward, to show how highly his fellow-citizens valued his courageous exertions.

"Nay, take it not thus, an' it like your worships," said the Smith, with his usual blunt manner, "lest men say that valour must be rare in Perth, when they reward a man for fighting for the right of a forlorn widow. I am sure there are many scores of stout burghers in the town who would have done this day's dargue, as well or better than I. For, in good sooth, I ought to have cracked yonder fellow's head-piece, like an earthen pipkin—ay, and would have done it too, if it had not been one which I myself tempered for Sir John Ramorny. But an' the Fair City think my service of any worth, I will conceive it far more than acquitted by any aid which you may afford from the Common Good,* to the support of the widow Magdalen and her poor orphans."

"That may well be done," said Sir Patrick Charteris, "and yet leave the Fair City rich enough to pay her debts to Henry Wynd, of which every man of us is a better judge than himself, who is blinded with an unavailing nicety, which men call modesty—And if the burgh be too poor for this, the Provost will bear his share. The Rover's golden angels have not all taken flight yet."

The beakers were now circulated, under the name of a cup of comfort to the widow, and anon flowed around once more to the happy memory of the murdered Oliver, now so bravely avenged. In short, it was a feast so jovial, that all agreed nothing was wanting to render it perfect, but the presence of the Bonnet-maker himself, whose calamity had occasioned the meeting, and who had usually furnished the standing jest at such festive assemblies. Had his attendance been possible, it was dryly observed by Bailie Craigdallie, he would certainly have claimed the success of the day, and vouched himself the avenger of his own murder.

At the sound of the vesper bell the company broke up, some of the graver sort going to evening prayers, where, with half-shut eyes and shining countenances, they made a most orthodox and edifying portion of a Lenten congregation; others to their own homes, to tell over the occurrences of the fight and feast, for the information of the family circle; and some, doubtless, to the licensed freedoms of some tavern, the door of which Lent did not keep so close shut as the forms of the Church required. Henry returned to the Wynd, warm with the good wine and the applause of his fellow-citizens, and fell asleep to dream of perfect happiness and Catharine Glover.

We have said, that when the combat was decided, the spectators were divided into two bodies. Of these, when the more respectable portion attended the victor in joyous procession, much the greater number, or what might be termed the rabble, waited upon the subdued and sentenced Bonthron, who was travelling in a different direction, and for a very opposite purpose. Whatever may be thought of the

* The public property of the burgh.

comparative attractions of the house of mourning and of feasting under other circumstances, there can be little doubt which will draw most visitors, when the question is, whether we would witness miseries which we are not to take share, or festivities of which we are not to partake. Accordingly, the tumbril in which the criminal was conveyed to execution, was attended by far the greater proportion of the inhabitants of Perth.

A friar was seated in the same car with the murderer, to whom he did not hesitate to repeat, under the seal of confession, the same false asseveration which he had made upon the place of combat, which charged the Duke of Rothsay with being director of the ambuscade by which the unfortunate Bonnet-maker had suffered. The same falsehood

Bonthron on his way to execution.

he disseminated among the crowd, averring, with unblushing effrontery to those who were nighest to the car, that he owed his death to his having been willing to execute the Duke of Rothsay's pleasure. For a time he repeated these words, sullenly and doggedly, in the manner of one reciting a task, or a liar who endeavours by reiteration to obtain a credit for his words, which he is internally sensible they do not deserve. But when he lifted up his eyes, and beheld in the distance the black outline of a gallows, at least forty feet high, with its ladder and its fatal cord, rising against the horizon, he became suddenly silent, and the friar could observe that he trembled very much.

"Be comforted, my son," said the good priest, "you have confessed the truth, and received absolution. Your penitence will be accepted according to your sincerity; and though you have been a man of

bloody hands and cruel heart, yet, by the Church's prayers, you shall be in due time assoilzied from the penal fires of purgatory."

These assurances were calculated rather to augment than to diminish the terrors of the culprit, who was agitated by doubts whether the mode suggested for his preservation from death would to a certainty be effectual, and some suspicion whether there was really any purpose of employing them in his favour; for he knew his master well enough to be aware of the indifference with which he would sacrifice one, who might on some future occasion be a dangerous evidence against him.

His doom, however, was sealed, and there was no escaping from it. They slowly approached the fatal tree, which was erected on a bank by the river's side; about half a mile from the walls of the city; a site chosen that the body of the wretch, which was to remain food for the carrion crows, might be seen from a distance in every direction. Here the priest delivered Bonthron to the executioner, by whom he was assisted up the ladder, and to all appearance despatched according to the usual forms of the law. He seemed to struggle for life for a minute, but soon after hung still and inanimate. The executioner, after remaining upon duty for more than half an hour, as if to permit the last spark of life to be extinguished, announced to the admirers of such spectacles, that the irons for the permanent suspension of the carcass not having been got ready, the concluding ceremony of disembowelling the dead body, and attaching it finally to the gibbet, would be deferred till the next morning at sunrise.

Notwithstanding the early hour which he had named, Master Smotherwell had a reasonable attendance of rabble at the place of execution, to see the final proceedings of justice with its victim. But great was the astonishment and resentment of these amateurs, to find that the dead body had been removed from the gibbet. They were not, however, long at a loss to guess the cause of its disappearance. Bonthron had been the follower of a Baron whose estates lay in Fife, and was himself a native of that province. What was more natural than that some of the Fife men, whose boats were frequently plying on the river, should have clandestinely removed the body of their countryman from the place of public shame? The crowd vented their rage against Smotherwell, for not completing his job on the preceding evening; and had not he and his assistant betaken themselves to a boat, and escaped across the Tay, they would have run some risk of being pelted to death. The event, however, was too much in the spirit of the times to be much wondered at. Its real cause we shall explain in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Let gallows gape for dogs, let men go free."

Henry V.

THE incidents of a narrative of this kind must be adapted to each other, as the wards of a key must tally accurately with those of the lock to which it belongs. The reader, however gentle, will not hold himself obliged to rest satisfied with the mere fact, that such and such occurrences took place, which is, generally speaking, all that in ordinary life he can know of what is passing around him; but he is desirous, while reading for amusement, of knowing the interior movements occasioning the course of events. This is a legitimate and reasonable curiosity; for every man hath a right to open and examine the mechanism of his own watch, put together for his proper use, although he is not permitted to pry into the interior of the timepiece, which, for general information, is displayed on the town-steeple.

It would be, therefore, uncourteous to leave my readers under any doubt concerning the agency which removed the assassin Bonthron from the gallows; an event which some of the Perth citizens ascribed to the foul Fiend himself, while others were content to lay it upon the natural dislike of Bonthron's countrymen of Fife to see him hanging on the river side, as a spectacle dishonourable to their province.

About midnight succeeding the day when the execution had taken place, and while the inhabitants of Perth were deeply buried in slumber, three men, muffled in their cloaks, and bearing a dark lantern, descended the alleys of a garden which led from the house occupied by Sir John Ramorny, to the banks of the Tay, where a small boat lay moored to a landing-place, or little projecting pier. The wind howled in a low and melancholy manner through the leafless shrubs and

bushes; and a pale moon *waded*, as it is termed in Scotland, amongst drifting clouds, which seemed to threaten rain. The three individuals entered the boat with great precaution, to escape observation. One of them was a tall powerful man; another short and bent downwards; the third middle-sized, and apparently younger than his companions, well made, and active. Thus much the imperfect light could discover. They seated themselves in the boat, and unmoored it from the pier.

"We must let her drift with the current till we pass the bridge, where the burghers still keep guard; and you know the proverb—'A Perth arrow hath a perfect flight,'" said the most youthful of the party, who assumed the office of helmsman, and pushed the boat off from the pier; whilst the others took the oars, which were muffled, and rowed with all precaution, till they attained the middle of the river; they then ceased their efforts, lay upon their oars, and trusted to the steersman for keeping her in mid-channel.

In this manner they passed unnoticed or disregarded beneath the stately Gothic arches of the old bridge, erected by the magnificent patronage of Robert Bruce in 1329, and carried away by an inundation in 1621. Although they heard the voices of a civic watch, which, since these disturbances commenced, had been nightly maintained in that important pass, no challenge was given; and when they were so far down the stream as to be out of hearing of these guardians of the night, they began to row, but still with precaution, and to converse, though in a low tone.

"You have found a new trade, comrade, since I left you," said one of the rowers to the other. "I left you engaged in tending a sick knight, and I find you employed in purloining a dead body from the gallows."

"A living body, so please your squirehood, Master Buncle; or else my craft hath failed of its purpose."

"So I am told, Master Pottercarrier; but saving your clerkship, unless you tell me your trick, I will take leave to doubt of its success."

"A simple toy, Master Buncle, not likely to please a genius so acute as that of your valiancie. Marry, thus it is. This suspension of the human body, which the vulgar call hanging, operates death by apoplexia,—that is, the blood being unable to return to the heart by the compression of the veins, it rushes to the brain, and the man dies. Also, and as an additional cause of dissolution, the lungs no longer receive the needful supply of the vital air, owing to the ligature of the cord around the thorax; and hence the patient perishes."

"I understand that well enough—But how is such a revulsion of blood to the brain to be prevented, Sir Mediciner?" said the third person, who was no other than Ramorny's page, Eviot.

"Marry, then," replied Dwining, "hang me the patient up in such fashion that the carotid arteries shall not be compressed, and the blood will not determine to the brain, and apoplexia will not take place; and

again, if there be no ligature around the thorax, the lungs will be supplied with air, whether the man be hanging in the middle heaven, or standing on the firm earth."

"All this I conceive," said Eviot; "but how these precautions can be reconciled with the execution of the sentence of hanging, is what my dull brain cannot comprehend."

"Ah! good youth, thy valiancie hath spoiled a fair wit. Hadst thou studied with me, thou shouldst have learned things more difficult than this. But here is my trick. I get me certain bandages, made of the same substance with your young valiancie's horse-girths, having especial care that they are of a kind which will not shrink on being strained, since that would spoil my experiment. One loop of this substance is drawn under each foot, and returns up either side of the leg to a cincture, with which it is united; these cinctures are connected by divers straps down the breast and back, in order to divide the weight, and there are sundry other conveniences for easing the patient; but the chief is this. The straps, or ligatures, are attached to a broad steel collar, curving outwards, and having a hook or two, for the better security of the halter, which the friendly executioner passes around that part of the machine, instead of applying it to the bare throat of the patient. Thus, when thrown off from the ladder, the sufferer will find himself suspended, not by his neck, if it please you, but by the steel circle, which supports the loops in which his feet are placed, and on which his weight really rests, diminished a little by similar supports under each arm. Thus, neither vein nor windpipe being compressed, the man will breathe as free, and his blood, saving from fright and novelty of situation, will flow as temperately as your valiancie's, when you stand up in your stirrups to view a field of battle."

"By my faith, a quaint and rare device!" quoth Buncle.

"Is it not?" pursued the leech, "and well worth being known to such mounting spirits as your valiancies, since there is no knowing to what height Sir John Ramorny's pupils may arrive; and if these be such, that it is necessary to descend from them by a rope, you may find my mode of management more convenient than the common practice. Marry, but you must be provided with a high-collared doublet, to conceal the ring of steel; and above all, such a *bonus socius* as Smotherwell to adjust the noose."

"Base poison-vendor," said Eviot, "men of our calling die on the field of battle!"

"I will save the lesson, however," replied Buncle, "in case of some pinching occasion. But what a night the bloody hangdog Bonthron must have had of it, dancing a pavise in mid air to the music of his own shackles, as the night wind swings him that way and this!"

"It were an alms deed to leave him there," said Eviot; "for his descent from the gibbet will but encourage him to new murders. He knows but two elements—drunkenness and bloodshed."

"Perhaps Sir John Ramorny might have been of your opinion," said Dwining; "but it would first have been necessary to cut out the rogue's tongue, lest he had told strange tales from his airy height. And there are other reasons that it concerns not your valiancies to know. In truth, I myself have been generous in serving him, for the fellow is built as strong as Edinburgh Castle, and his anatomy would have matched any that is in the chirurgical hall of Padua. But tell me, Master Buncle, what news bring you from the doughty Douglas?"

"They may tell that know," said Buncle. "I am the dull ass that bears the message, and kens nought of its purport. The safer for myself perhaps. I carried letters from the Duke of Albany and from Sir John Ramorny to the Douglas, and he looked black as a northern tempest when he opened them—I brought them answers from the Earl, at which they smiled like the sun when the harvest storm is closing over him. Go to your Ephemerides, leech, and conjure the meaning out of that."

"Methinks I can do so without much cost of wit," said the chirurgeon; "but yonder I see in the pale moonlight our dead-alive. Should he have screamed out to any chance passenger, it were a curious interruption to a night-journey to be hailed from the top of such a gallows as that. Hark, methinks I do hear his groans amid the whistling of the wind and the creaking of the chains. So—fair and softly—make fast the boat with the grappling—and get out the casket with my matters—we would we better for a little fire, but the light might bring observation on us. Come on, my men of valour, march warily, for we are bound for the gallows foot—Follow with the lantern—I trust the ladder has been left.

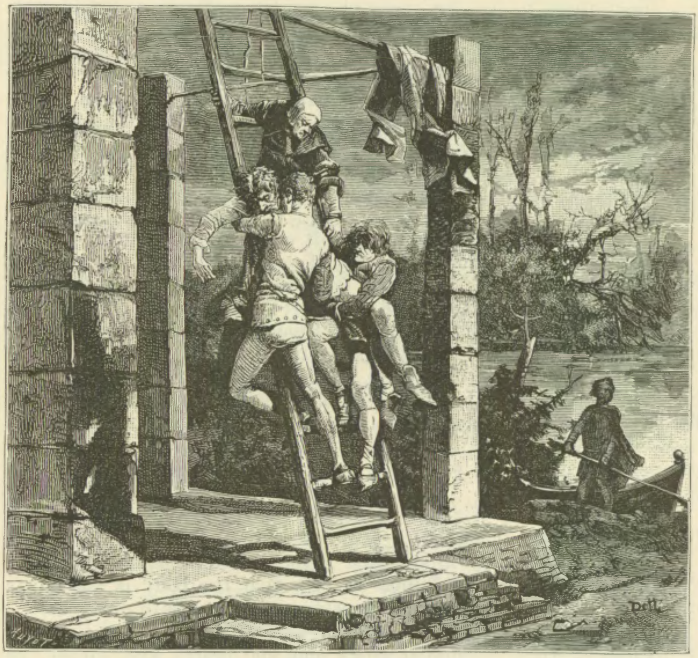
"'Sing, three merry-men, and three merry-men,
And three merry-men are we,
Thou on the land, and I on the sand,
And Jack on the gallows tree.'"

As they advanced to the gibbet, they could plainly hear groans, though uttered in a low tone. Dwining ventured to give a low cough once or twice, by way of signal; but receiving no answer, "We had best make haste," said he to his companions, "for our friend must be *in extremis*, as he gives no answer to the signal which announces the arrival of help. Come, let us to the gear. I will go up the ladder first and cut the rope. Do you two follow, one after another, and take fast hold of the body, so that he fall not when the halter is unloosed. Keep sure gripe, for which the bandages will afford you convenience. Bethink you, that though he plays an owl's part to-night, he hath no wings, and to fall out of a halter may be as dangerous as to fall into one."

While he spoke thus with sneer and gibe, he ascended the

ladder, and having ascertained that the men-at-arms who followed him had the body in their hold, he cut the rope, and then gave his aid to support the almost lifeless form of the criminal.

By a skilful exertion of strength and address, the body of Bonthron was placed safely on the ground, and the faint, yet certain existence of life having been ascertained, it was thence transported to the river side, where, shrouded by the bank, the party might be best concealed from



Bonthron is rescued from the gallows.

observation, while the leech employed himself in the necessary means of recalling animation, with which he had taken care to provide himself.

For this purpose he first freed the recovered person from his shackles, which the executioner had left unlocked on purpose, and at the same time disengaged the complicated envelopes and bandages by which he had been suspended. It was some time ere Dwining's efforts

succeeded; for in despite of the skill with which his machine had been constructed, the straps designed to support the body, had stretched so considerably as to occasion the sense of suffocation becoming extremely overpowering. But the address of the surgeon triumphed over all obstacles; and after sneezing and stretching himself, with one or two brief convulsions, Bonthron gave decided proofs of reanimation, by arresting the hand of the operator as it was in the act of dropping strong waters on his breast and throat; and directing the bottle which contained them to his lips, he took, almost perforce, a considerable gulp of the contents.

"It is spiritual essence, double distilled," said the astonished operator, "and would blister the throat, and burn the stomach of any other man. But this extraordinary beast is so unlike all other human creatures, that I should not wonder if it brought him to the complete possession of his faculties."

Bonthron seemed to confirm this; he started with a strong convulsion, sat up, stared around, and indicated some consciousness of existence.

"Wine—wine," were the first words which he articulated.

The leech gave him a draught of medicated wine, mixed with water. He rejected it, under the dishonourable epithet of "kennel-washings," and again uttered the words—"Wine—wine."

"Nay, take it to thee, i' the devil's name," said the leech, "since none but he can judge of thy constitution."

A draught, long and deep enough to have discomposed the intellects of any other person, was found effectual in recalling those of Bonthron to a more perfect state; though he betrayed no recollection of where he was or what had befallen him, and in his brief and sullen manner, asked why he was brought to the river side at this time of night.

"Another frolic of the wild Prince, for drenching me as he did before—Nails and blood, but I would——"

"Hold thy peace," interrupted Eviot, "and be thankful, I pray you, if you have any thankfulness in you, that thy body is not crow's meat, and thy soul in a place where water is too scarce to duck thee."

"I begin to bethink me," said the ruffian; and raising the flask to his mouth, which he saluted with a long and hearty kiss, he set the empty bottle on the earth, dropped his head on his bosom, and seemed to muse for the purpose of arranging his confused recollections.

"We can abide the issue of his meditations no longer," said Dwining, "he will be better after he has slept. Up, sir! you have been riding the air these some hours—try if the water be not an easier mode of conveyance. Your valours must lend me a hand. I can no more lift this mass, than I could raise in my arms a slaughtered bull."

"Stand upright on thine own feet, Bonthron, now we have placed thee upon them," said Eviot.

"I cannot," answered the patient. "Every drop of blood tingles in my veins as if it had pin-points, and my knees refuse to bear their burden. What can be the meaning of all this? This is some practice of thine, thou dog leech!"

"Ay, ay, so it is, honest Bonthron," said Dwining, "a practice thou shalt thank me for, when thou comest to learn it. In the meanwhile, stretch down in the stern of that boat, and let me wrap this cloak about thee." Assisted into the boat accordingly, Bonthron was deposited there as conveniently as things admitted of. He answered their attentions with one or two snorts resembling the grunt of a boar, who has got some food particularly agreeable to him.

"And now, Buncle," said the chirurgeon, "your valiant squireship knows your charge. You are to carry this lively cargo by the river to Newburgh, where you are to dispose of him as you wot of; meantime, here are his shackles and bandages, the marks of his confinement and liberation. Bind them up together, and fling them into the deepest pool you pass over; for, found in your possession, they might tell tales against us all. This low, light breath of wind from the west, will permit you to use a sail as soon as the light comes in, and you are tired of rowing. Your other valiancy, Master Page Eviot, must be content to return to Perth with me a-foot, for here severs our fair company. Take with thee the lantern, Buncle, for thou wilt require it more than we, and see thou send me back my flasket."

As the pedestrians returned to Perth, Eviot expressed his belief that Bonthron's understanding would never recover the shock which terror had inflicted upon it, and which appeared to him to have disturbed all the faculties of his mind, and in particular his memory.

"It is not so, an' it please your pagehood," said the leech. "Bonthron's intellect, such as it is, hath a solid character—it will but vacillate to and fro like a pendulum which hath been put in motion, and then will rest in its proper point of gravity. Our memory is, of all our powers of mind, that which is peculiarly liable to be suspended. Deep intoxication or sound sleep alike destroy it, and yet it returns when the drunkard becomes sober, or the sleeper is awakened. Terror sometimes produces the same effects. I knew at Paris a criminal condemned to die by the halter, who suffered the sentence accordingly, showing no particular degree of timidity upon the scaffold, and behaving and expressing himself as men in the same condition are wont to do. Accident did for him what a little ingenious practice hath done for our amiable friend from whom we but now parted. He was cut down, and given to his friends before life was extinct, and I had the good fortune to restore him. But though he recovered in other particulars, he remembered but little of his trial and sentence. Of his confession on the morning of his execution—he! he! he!"—(in his usual chuckling manner)—"he remembered him not a word. Neither of leaving the prison—nor of his passage to the Greve, where he

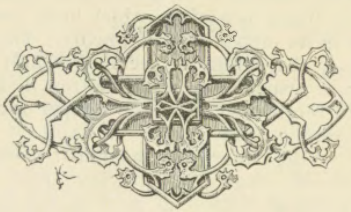
suffered—nor of the devout speeches with which—he! he! he!—edified—he! he! he!—so many good Christians—nor of ascending the fatal tree, nor of taking the fatal leap, had my revenant the slightest recollection.* But here we reach the point where we must separate; for it were unfit, should we meet any of the watch, that we be found together, and it were also prudent that we enter the city by different gates. My profession forms an excuse for my going and coming at all times. Your valiant pagehood will make such explanation as may seem sufficing."

"I shall make my will a sufficient excuse if I am interrogated," said the haughty young man. "Yet I will avoid interruption, if possible. The moon is quite obscured, and the road as black as a wolf's mouth."

"Tut," said the physicianer, "let not your valour care for that; we shall tread darker paths ere it be long."

Without inquiring into the meaning of these evil-boding sentences, and indeed hardly listening to them in the pride and recklessness of his nature, the page of Ramorny parted from his ingenious and dangerous companion; and each took his own way.

* An incident precisely similar to that in the text actually occurred, within the present century, at Oxford, in the case of a young woman who underwent the last sentence of the law for child-murder. A learned professor of that university has published an account of his conversation with the girl after her recovery.



CHAPTER XXV.

"The course of true love never did run smooth."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE ominous anxiety of our armourer had not played him false. When the good Glover parted with his intended son-in-law, after the judicial combat had been decided, he found, what he indeed had expected, that his fair daughter was in no favourable disposition towards her lover. But although he perceived that Catharine was cold, restrained, collected, had cast away the appearance of mortal passion, and listened with a reserve, implying contempt, to the most splendid description he could give her of the combat in the Skinners' Yards, he was determined not to take the least notice of her altered manner, but to speak of her marriage with his son Henry as a thing which must of course take place. At length, when she began, as on a former occasion, to intimate, that her attachment to the armourer did not exceed the bounds of friendship,—that she was resolved never to marry,—that the pretended judicial combat was a mockery of the divine will, and of human laws,—the Glover not unnaturally grew angry.

"I cannot read thy thoughts, wench; nor can I pretend to guess under what wicked delusion it is that you kiss a declared lover,—suffer him to kiss you,—run to his house when a report is spread of his death, and fling yourself into his arms when you find him alone. All this shows very well in a girl prepared to obey her parents in a match sanctioned by her father; but such tokens of intimacy, bestowed on one whom a young woman cannot esteem, and is determined not to marry, are uncomely and unmaidenly. You have already been more bounteous of your favours to Henry Smith, than your mother, whom

God assoilzie, ever was to me before I married her. I tell thee, Catharine, this trifling with the love of an honest man, is what I neither can, will, nor ought to endure. I have given my consent to the match, and I insist it shall take place without delay; and that you receive Henry Wynd to-morrow, as a man whose bride you are to be with all dispatch."

"A power more potent than yours, father, will say no," replied Catharine.

"I will risk it; my power is a lawful one, that of a father over a child, and an erring child," answered her father. "God and man allow of my influence."

"Then, may Heaven help us!" said Catharine: "for if you are obstinate in your purpose, we are all lost."

"We can expect no help from Heaven," said the Glover, "when we act with indiscretion. I am clerk enough myself to know that; and that your causeless resistance to my will is sinful, every priest will inform you. Ay, and more than that, you have spoken degradingly of the blessed appeal to God in the combat of ordeal. Take heed! for the holy Church is awakened to watch her sheepfold, and to extirpate heresy by fire and steel; so much I warn thee of."

Catharine uttered a suppressed exclamation; and with difficulty compelling herself to assume an appearance of composure, promised her father, that if he would spare her any further discussion of the subject till to-morrow morning, she would then meet him, determined to make a full discovery of her sentiments.

With this promise, Simon Glover was obliged to remain contented, though extremely anxious for the postponed explanation. It could not be levity or fickleness of character which induced his daughter to act with so much apparent inconsistency towards the man of his choice, and whom she had so lately unequivocally owned to be also the man of her own. What external force there could exist, of a kind powerful enough to change the resolutions she had so decidedly expressed within twenty-four hours, was a matter of complete mystery.

"But I will be as obstinate as she can be," thought the Glover, "and she shall either marry Henry Smith without farther delay, or old Simon Glover will know an excellent reason to the contrary."

The subject was not renewed during the evening; but early on the next morning, just at sunrising, Catharine knelt before the bed in which her parent still slumbered. Her heart sobbed as if it would burst, and her tears fell thick upon her father's face. The good old man awoke, looked up, crossed his child's forehead, and kissed her affectionately.

"I understand thee, Kate," he said; "thou art come to confession, and, I trust, art desirous to escape a heavy penance by being sincere."

Catharine was silent for an instant.

"I need not ask, my father, if you remember the Carthusian

monk, Clement, and his preachings and lessons; at which indeed you assisted so often, that you cannot be ignorant men called you one of his converts, and with greater justice termed me so likewise?"

"I am aware of both," said the old man, raising himself on his elbow; "but I defy foul fame to show that I ever owned him in any heretical proposition, though I loved to hear him talk of the corruptions of the church, the misgovernment of the nobles, and the wild ignorance of the poor, proving, as it seemed to me, that the sole virtue of our commonweal, its strength, and its estimation, lay among the burgher craft of the better class, which I received as comfortable doctrine, and creditable to the town. And if he preached other than right doctrine, wherefore did his superiors in the Carthusian convent permit it? If the shepherds turn a wolf in sheep's clothing into the flock, they should not blame the sheep for being worried."

"They endured his preaching, nay, they encouraged it," said Catharine, "while the vices of the laity, the contentions of the nobles, and the oppression of the poor, were the subjects of his censure, and they rejoiced in the crowds, who, attracted to the Carthusian church, forsook those of the other convents. But the hypocrites—for such they are—joined with the other fraternities in accusing their preacher Clement, when, passing from censuring the crimes of the state, he began to display the pride, ignorance, and luxury of the churchmen themselves, their thirst of power, their usurpation over men's conciences, and their desire to augment their worldly wealth."

"For God's sake, Catharine," said her father, "speak within doors; your voice rises in tone, and your speech in bitterness,—your eyes sparkle. It is owing to this zeal in what concerns you no more than others, that malicious persons fix upon you the odious and dangerous name of a heretic."

"You know I speak no more than what is truth," said Catharine, "and which you yourself have avouched often."

"By needle and buck-skin, no!" answered the Glover, hastily; "wouldst thou have me avouch what might cost me life and limb, land and goods? For a full commission hath been granted for taking and trying heretics, upon whom is laid the cause of all late tumults and miscarriages; wherefore, few words are best, wench. I am ever of mind with the old Maker,—

> "Since word is thrall, and thought is free,
> Keep well thy tongue, I counsel thee." *

"The counsel comes too late, father," answered Catharine, sinking down on a chair by her father's bedside. "The words have been spoken and heard; and it is indited against Simon Glover, burgess in Perth, that he hath spoken irreverent discourses of the doctrines of holy Church——"

* These lines are still extant in the ruinous house of an Abbot, and are said to be allusive to the holy man having kept a mistress.

"As I live by knife and needle," interrupted Simon, "it is a lie! I never was so silly as to speak of what I understood not."

"And hath slandered the anointed of the Church, both regular and secular," continued Catharine.

"Nay, I will never deny the truth," said the Glover; "an idle word I may have spoken at the ale-bench, or over a pottle pot of wine, or in right sure company; but else, my tongue is not one to run my head into peril."

"So you think, my dearest father; but your slightest language has been espied, your best-meaning phrases have been perverted, and you are in dittay as a gross railer against church and churchmen, and for holding discourse against them with loose and profligate persons, such as the deceased Oliver Proudfute, the Smith Henry of the Wynd, and others, set forth as commending the doctrines of Father Clement, whom they charge with seven rank heresies, and seek for with staff and spear, to try him to the death. But that," said Catharine, kneeling, and looking upwards with the aspect of one of those beauteous saints whom the Catholics have given to the fine arts,—"that they shall never do. He hath escaped from the net of the fowler; and, I thank Heaven, it was by my means."

"Thy means, girl—art thou mad?" said the amazed Glover.

"I will not deny what I glory in," answered Catharine; "it was by my means that Conachar was led to come hither with a party of men, and carry off the old man, who is now far beyond the Highland line."

"Oh, my rash—my unlucky child!" said the Glover; "hast thou dared to aid the escape of one accused of heresy, and to invite Highlanders in arms to interfere with the administration of justice within burgh? Alas! thou hast offended both against the laws of the church and those of the realm. What—what would become of us, were this known?"

"It *is* known, my dear father," said the maiden, firmly; "known even to those who will be the most willing avengers of the deed."

"This must be some idle notion, Catharine, or some trick of those cogging priests and nuns; it accords not with thy late cheerful willingness to wed Henry Smith."

"Alas! dearest father, remember the dismal surprise occasioned by his reported death, and the joyful amazement at finding him alive; and deem it not wonder if I permitted myself, under your protection, to say more than my reflection justified. But then, I knew not the worst, and thought the danger exaggerated. Alas! I was yesterday fearfully undeceived, when the Abbess herself came hither, and with her the Dominican. They showed me the commission, under the broad seal of Scotland, for inquiring into and punishing heresy; they showed me your name, and my own, in a list of suspected persons; and it was with tears, real tears, that the Abbess conjured me to avert a dreadful

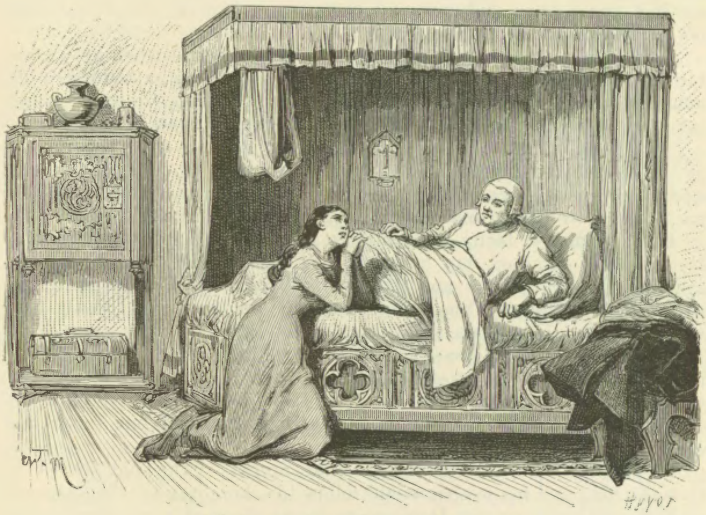
fate, by a speedy retreat into the cloister; and that the monk pledged his word that you should not be molested, if I complied."

"The foul fiend take them both for weeping crocodiles!" said the Glover.

"Alas!" replied Catharine, "complaint or anger will little help us; but you see I have had real cause for this present alarm."

"Alarm! call it utter ruin. Alas! my reckless child, where was your prudence when you ran headlong into such a snare?"

"Hear me, father," said Catharine; "there is still one mode of



Catharine entreats permission to enter a convent.

safety held out; it is one which I have often proposed, and for which I have in vain supplicated your permission."

"I understand you—the convent," said her father. "But, Catharine, what abbess or prioress would dare——"

"That I will explain to you, father, and it will also show the circumstances which have made me seem unsteady of resolution to a degree which has brought censure upon me from yourself and others. Our confessor, old Father Francis, whom I chose from the Dominican convent at your command——"

"Ay, truly," interrupted the Glover; "and I so counselled and commanded thee, in order to take off the report that thy conscience was altogether under the direction of Father Clement."

"Well, this Father Francis has at different times urged and provoked me to converse on such matters as he judged I was likely to learn something of from the Carthusian preacher. Heaven forgive me my blindness! I fell into the snare, spoke freely, and, as he argued gently, as one who would fain be convinced, I even spoke warmly in defence of what I believed devoutly. The confessor assumed not his real aspect, and betrayed not his secret purpose, until he had learned all that I had to tell him. It was then that he threatened me with temporal punishment, and with eternal condemnation. Had his threats reached me alone, I could have stood firm; for their cruelty on earth I could have endured, and their power beyond this life I have no belief in."

"For Heaven's sake!" said the Glover, who was wellnigh beside himself at perceiving at every new word the increasing extremity of his daughter's danger, "beware of blaspheming the holy Church—whose arms are as prompt to strike as her ears are sharp to hear."

"To me," said the Maid of Perth, again looking up, "the terrors of the threatened denunciations would have been of little avail; but when they spoke of involving thee, my father, in the charge against me, I own I trembled, and desired to compromise. The Abbess Martha, of Elcho nunnery, being my mother's kinswoman, I told her my distresses, and obtained her promise that she would receive me, if, renouncing worldly love and thoughts of wedlock, I would take the veil in her sisterhood. She had conversation on the topic, I doubt not, with the Dominican Francis, and both joined in singing the same song. 'Remain in the world,' said they, 'and thy father and thou shall be brought to trial as heretics—assume the veil, and the errors of both shall be forgiven and cancelled.' They spoke not even of recantation of errors of doctrine; all should be peace if I would but enter the convent."

"I doubt not—I doubt not," said Simon; "the old Glover is thought rich, and his wealth would follow his daughter to the convent of Elcho, unless what the Dominicans might claim as their own share. So this was thy call to the veil—these thy objections to Henry Wynd?"

"Indeed, father, the course was urged on all hands, nor did my own mind recoil from it. Sir John Ramorny threatened me with the powerful vengeance of the young Prince, if I continued to repel his wicked suit—and as for poor Henry, it is but of late that I have discovered, to my own surprise—that—that I love his virtues more than I dislike his faults. Alas! the discovery has only been made to render my quitting the world more difficult than when I thought I had thee only to regret!"

She rested her head on her hand, and wept bitterly.

"All this is folly," said the Glover. "Never was there an extremity so pinching, but what a wise man might find counsel if he was daring enough to act upon it. This has never been the land or

the people over whom priests could rule in the name of Rome, without their usurpation being controlled. If they are to punish each honest burgher who says the monks love gold, and that the lives of some of them cry shame upon the doctrines they teach, why truly, Stephen Smotherwell will not lack employment—and if all foolish maidens are to be secluded from the world because they follow the erring doctrines of a popular preaching friar, they must enlarge the nunneries and receive their inmates on slighter composition. Our privileges have been often defended against the Pope himself, by our good monarchs of yore, and when he pretended to interfere with the temporal government of the kingdom, there wanted not a Scottish Parliament, who told him his duty in a letter that should have been written in letters of gold. I have seen the epistle myself, and though I could not read it, the very sight of the seals of the right reverend prelates, and noble and true barons, which hung at it, made my heart leap for joy. Thou shouldst not have kept this secret, my child; but it is no time to tax thee with thy fault. Go down, get me some food. I will mount instantly, and go to our Lord Provost, and have his advice, and, as I trust, his protection and that of other true-hearted Scottish nobles, who will not see a true man trodden down for an idle word."

"Alas, my father," said Catharine, "it was even this impetuosity which I dreaded. I knew if I made my plaint to you there would soon be fire and feud, as if religion, though sent to us by the Father of peace, were fit only to be the mother of discord—and hence I could now —even now—give up the world, and retire with my sorrow among the sisters of Elcho, would you but let me be the sacrifice. Only, father—comfort poor Henry when we are parted for ever—and do not—do not let him think of me too harshly. Say Catharine will never vex him more by her remonstrances, but that she will never forget him in her prayers."

"The girl hath a tongue that would make a Saracen weep," said her father, his own eyes sympathising with those of his daughter. "But I will not yield way to this combination between the nun and the priest, to rob me of my only child. Away with you, girl, and let me don my clothes; and prepare yourself to obey me in what I may have to recommend for your safety. Get a few clothes together, and what valuables thou hast—also, take the keys of my iron box, which poor Henry Smith gave me, and divide what gold you find into two portions, —put the one into a purse for thyself, and the other into the quilted girdle which I made on purpose to wear on journeys. Thus both shall be provided, in case fate should sunder us; in which event, God send the whirlwind may take the withered leaf, and spare the green one! Let them make ready my horse instantly, and the white jennet that I bought for thee but a day since, hoping to see thee ride to St. John's Kirk with maids and matrons, as blithe a bride as ever crossed the holy threshold. But it skills not talking. Away, and remember that the

saints help those who are willing to help themselves. Not a word in answer—begone, I say,—no wilfulness now. The pilot, in calm weather, will let a sea-boy trifle with the rudder; but, by my soul, when winds howl, and waves arise, he stands by the helm himself. Away; no reply."

Catharine left the room to execute, as well as she might, the commands of her father, who, gentle in disposition, and devotedly attached to his child, suffered her often, as it seemed, to guide and rule both herself and him; yet who, as she knew, was wont to claim filial obedience, and exercise parental authority, with sufficient strictness, when the occasion seemed to require an enforcement of domestic discipline.

While the fair Catharine was engaged in executing her father's behests, and the good old Glover was hastily attiring himself, as one who was about to take a journey, a horse's tramp was heard in the narrow street. The horseman was wrapped in his riding cloak, having the cape of it drawn up, as if to hide the under part of his face, while his bonnet was pulled over his brows, and a broad plume obscured his upper features. He sprung from the saddle, and Dorothy had scarce time to reply to his inquiries that the Glover was in his bedroom, ere the stranger had ascended the stair and entered the sleeping apartment. Simon, astonished and alarmed, and disposed to see in this early visitant an apparitor or sumner, come to attach him and his daughter, was much relieved, when, as the stranger doffed the bonnet, and threw the skirt of the mantle from his face, he recognised the knightly Provost of the Fair City, a visit from whom, at any time, was a favour of no ordinary degree; but being made at such an hour, had something marvellous, and, connected with the circumstances of the times, even alarming.

"Sir Patrick Charteris?"—said the Glover—"this high honour done to your poor beadsman——"

"Hush!" said the Knight, "there is no time for idle civilities. I came hither, because a man is, in trying occasions, his own safest page, and I can remain no longer than to bid thee fly, good Glover, since warrants are to be granted this day in council for the arrest of thy daughter and thee, under charge of heresy; and delay will cost you both your liberty for certain, and perhaps your lives."

"I have heard something of such a matter," said the Glover, "and was this instant setting forth to Kinfauns, to plead my innocence of this scandalous charge, to ask your lordship's counsel, and to implore your protection."

"Thy innocence, friend Simon, will avail thee but little before prejudiced judges; my advice is, in one word, to fly, and wait for happier times. As for my protection, we must tarry till the tide turns ere it will in any sort avail thee. But if thou canst lie concealed for a few days or weeks, I have little doubt that the churchmen, who, by

siding with the Duke of Albany in court intrigue, and by alleging the decay of the purity of Catholic doctrine as the sole cause of the present national misfortunes, have, at least for the present hour, an irresistible authority over the King, will receive a check. In the meanwhile, however, know that King Robert hath not only given way to this general warrant for inquisition after heresy, but hath confirmed the Pope's nomination of Henry Wardlaw, to be Archbishop of

Sir Patrick Charteris warns the Glover of his danger.

St. Andrews, and Primate of Scotland; * thus yielding to Rome those freedoms and immunities of the Scottish church, which his ancestors, from the time of Malcolm Canmore, have so boldly defended. His brave

* Mastere Henry of Wardlaw
That like til Vertue was to draw,
Chantour that time of Glasgu,
Commendit of alkyn Vertew,
The Pape had in affectioun,
Baith for his fame and his resoun.
* * * * * *
Sua by this resoun speciale
Of the threttinth Benet Pape,
This Master Henry was Bischape
Of Sanct Andrewis with honoure.
Of Canon he was then Doctour.
Wyntoun, B ix. chap. 23.

fathers would have rather suscribed a covenant with the devil, than yielded in such a matter to the pretensions of Rome."

"Alas, and what remedy?"

"None, old man, save in some sudden court change," said Sir Patrick. "The King is but like a mirror, which, having no light itself, reflects back with equal readiness any which is placed near to it for the time. Now, although the Douglas is banded with Albany, yet the Earl is unfavourable to the high claims of those domineering priests, having quarrelled with them about the exactions which his retinue hath raised on the Abbot of Arbroath. He will come back again with a high hand, for report says, the Earl of March hath fled before him. When he returns we shall have a changed world, for his presence will control Albany; especially as many nobles, and I myself, as I tell you in confidence, are resolved to league with him to defend the general right. Thy exile, therefore, will end with his return to our court. Thou hast but to seek thee some temporary hiding-place."

"For that, my lord," said the Glover, "I can be at no loss, since I have just title to the protection of the high Highland Chief, Gilchrist MacIan, Chief of the Clan Quhele."

"Nay, if thou canst take hold of his mantle thou needs no help of any one else—neither lowland churchman nor layman finds a free course of justice beyond the Highland frontier."

"But then my child, noble sir—my Catharine?" said the Glover.

"Let her go with thee, man. The graddan cake will keep her white teeth in order, the goat's whey will make the blood spring to her cheek again, which these alarms have banished; and even the Fair Maiden of Perth may sleep soft enough on a bed of Highland breckan."

"It is not from such idle respects, my lord, that I hesitate," said the Glover. "Catharine is the daughter of a plain burgher, and knows not nicety of food or lodging. But the son of MacIan hath been for many years a guest in my house, and I am obliged to say, that I have observed him looking at my daughter (who is as good as a betrothed bride) in a manner that, though I cared not for it in this lodging in Curfew Street, would give me some fear of consequences in a Highland glen, where I have no friend, and Conachar many."

The knightly Provost replied by a long whistle.—"Whew! whew!—Nay, in that case, I advise thee to send her to the nunnery at Elcho, where the Abbess, if I forget not, is some relation of yours. Indeed she said so herself, adding, that she loved her kinswoman well, together with all that belongs to thee, Simon."

"Truly, my lord, I do believe that the Abbess has so much regard for me, that she would willingly receive the trust of my daughter, and my whole goods and gear into her sisterhood—Marry, her affection is something of a tenacious character, and would be loath to unloose its hold, either upon the wench or her tocher."

"Whew—whew!" again whistled the Knight of Kinfauns; "by

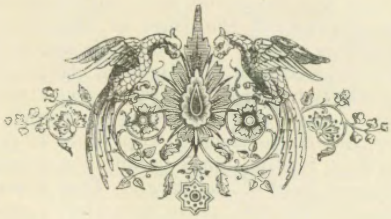
the Thane's Cross, man, but this is an ill-favoured pirn to wind. Yet it shall never be said the fairest maid in the Fair City was cooped up in a convent, like a kain-hen in a cavey, and she about to be married to the bold burgess Henry Wynd. That tale shall not be told while I wear belt and spurs, and am called Provost of Perth."

"But what remede, my lord?" asked the Glover.

"We must all take our share of the risk. Come, get you and your daughter presently to horse. You shall ride with me, and we'll see who dare gloom at you. The summons is not yet served on thee, and if they send an apparitor to Kinfauns, without a warrant under the King's own hand, I make mine avow, by the Red Rover's soul! that he shall eat his writ, both wax and wether-skin. To horse, to horse! and," addressing Catharine, as she entered at the moment, "you too, my pretty maid,

> "To horse, and fear not for your quarters;
> They thrive in law that trust in Charters."

In a minute or two the father and daughter were on horseback, both keeping an arrow's flight before the Provost, by his direction, that they might not seem to be of the same company. They passed the eastern gate in some haste, and rode forward roundly until they were out of sight. Sir Patrick followed leisurely; but, when he was lost to the view of the warders, he spurred his mettled horse, and soon came up with the Glover and Catharine, when a conversation ensued which throws light upon some previous passages of this history.



CHAPTER XXVI.

"Hail, land of bowmen! seed of those who scorn'd
To stoop the neck to wide imperial Rome—
O dearest half of Albion sea-walled!"

Albania (1737).

"I HAVE been devising a mode," said the well-meaning Provost, "by which I may make you both secure for a week or two from the malice of your enemies, when I have little doubt I may see a changed world at court. But that I may the better judge what is to be done, tell me frankly, Simon, the nature of your connection with Gilchrist MacIan, which leads you to repose such implicit confidence in him. You are a close observer of the rules of the city, and are aware of the severe penalties which they denounce against such burghers as have covine and alliance with the Highland clans."

"True, my lord; but it is also known to you, that our craft, working in skins of cattle, stags, and every other description of hides, have a privilege, and are allowed to transact with those Highlanders, as with the men who can most readily supply us with the means of conducting our trade, to the great profit of the burgh. Thus it hath chanced with me to have great dealings with these men; and I can take it on my salvation, that you nowhere find more just and honourable traffickers, or by whom a man may more easily make an honest penny. I have made in my day several distant journeys into the far Highlands, upon the faith of their chiefs; nor did I ever meet with a people more true to their word, when you can once prevail upon them to plight it in your behalf. And as for the Highland Chief, Gilchrist MacIan, saving that he is hasty in homicide and fire-raising towards those with whom he

hath deadly feud, I have nowhere seen a man who walked a more just and upright path."

"It is more than ever I heard before," said Sir Patrick Charteris. "Yet I have known something of the Highland runagates too."

"They show another favour, and a very different one, to their friends than to their enemies, as your lordship shall understand," said the Glover. "However, be that as it may, it chanced me to serve Gilchrist MacIan in a high matter. It is now about eighteen years since that it chanced, the Clan Quhele and Clan Chattan being at feud, as indeed they are seldom at peace, the former sustained such a defeat, as wellnigh extirpated the family of their chief, MacIan. Seven of his sons were slain in battle and after it, himself put to flight, and his castle taken and given to the flames. His wife, then near the time of giving birth to an infant, fled into the forest, attended by one faithful servant and his daughter. Here, in sorrow and care enough, she gave birth to a boy; and as the misery of the mother's condition rendered her little able to suckle the infant, he was nursed with the milk of a doe, which the forester who attended her contrived to take alive in a snare. It was not many months afterwards, that, in a second encounter of these fierce clans, MacIan defeated his enemies in his turn, and regained possession of the district which he had lost. It was with unexpected rapture that he found his wife and child were in existence, having never expected to see more of them than the bleached bones, from which the wolves and wild cats had eaten the flesh.

"But a strong and prevailing prejudice, such as is often entertained by these wild people, prevented their Chief from enjoying the full happiness arising from having thus regained his only son in safety. An ancient prophecy was current among them, that the power of the tribe should fall by means of a boy born under a bush of holly, and suckled by a white doe. The circumstance, unfortunately for the Chief, tallied exactly with the birth of the only child which remained to him, and it was demanded of him by the elders of the clan, that the boy should be either put to death, or at least removed from the dominions of the tribe, and brought up in obscurity. Gilchrist MacIan was obliged to consent; and having made choice of the latter proposal, the child, under the name of Conachar, was brought up in my family, with the purpose, as was at first intended, of concealing from him all knowledge who or what he was, or of his pretensions to authority over a numerous and warlike people. But as years rolled on, the elders of the tribe, who had exerted so much authority, were removed by death, or rendered incapable of interfering in the public affairs by age; while, on the other hand, the influence of Gilchrist MacIan was increased by his successful struggles against the Clan Chattan, in which he restored the equality betwixt the two contending confederacies, which had existed before the calamitous defeat of which I told your honour. Feeling himself thus firmly seated, he naturally became desirous to bring home his only son

to his bosom and family; and for that purpose caused me to send the young Conachar, as he was called, more than once to the Highlands. He was a youth expressly made, by his form and gallantry of bearing, to gain a father's heart. At length, I suppose the lad either guessed the secret of his birth, or something of it was communicated to him; and the disgust which the haughty Hieland varlet had always shown for my honest trade became more manifest; so that I dared not so much as lay my staff over his costard, for fear of receiving a stab with a dirk, as an answer in Gaelic to a Saxon remark. It was then that I wished to be well rid of him, the rather that he showed so much devotion to Catharine, who, forsooth, set herself up to wash the Ethiopian, and teach a wild Hielandman mercy and morals. She knows herself how it ended."

"Nay, my father," said Catharine, "it was surely but a point of charity to snatch the brand from the burning."

"But a small point of wisdom," said her father, "to risk the burning of your own fingers for such an end. What says my lord to the matter?"

"My lord would not offend the Fair Maid of Perth," said Sir Patrick; "and he knows well the purity and truth of her mind. And yet I must needs say, that had this nursling of the doe been shrivelled, haggard, cross-made, and redhaired, like some Highlanders I have known, I question if the Fair Maiden of Perth would have bestowed so much zeal upon his conversion; and if Catharine had been as aged, wrinkled, and bent by years, as the old woman that opened the door to me this morning, I would wager my gold spurs against a pair of Highland brogues, that this wild roebuck would never have listened to a second lecture. You laugh, Glover, and Catharine blushes a blush of anger. Let it pass, it is the way of the world."

"The way in which the men of the world esteem their neighbours, my lord," answered Catharine, with some spirit.

"Nay, fair saint, forgive a jest," said the Knight; "and thou, Simon, tell us how this tale ended—with Conachar's escape to the Highlands, I suppose?"

"With his return thither," said the Glover. "There was, for some two or three years, a fellow about Perth, a sort of messenger, who came and went under divers pretences, but was in fact the means of communication between Gilchrist MacIan and his son, young Conachar, or, as he is now called, Hector. From this gillie, I learned, in general, that the banishment of the Dault an Neigh Dheil, or foster child of the White Doe, was again brought under consideration of the tribe. His foster father, Torquil of the Oak, the old forester, appeared with eight sons, the finest men of the clan, and demanded that the doom of banishment should be revoked. He spoke with the greater authority, as he was himself Taishatar, or a Seer, and supposed to have communication with the invisible world. He affirmed that he had

performed a magical ceremony, termed *Tin-Egan*,* by which he evoked a fiend, from whom he extorted a confession that Conachar, now called Eachin, or Hector MacIan, was the only man in the approaching

Simon Glover goes to seek the protection of the Chief of the Clan Quhele.

combat between the two hostile clans, who should come off without

* *Tine-egan*, or *Neidfyre*, *i.e.*, forced fire. All the fires in the house being extinguished, two men produced a flame of potent virtue by the friction of wood. This charm was used, within the memory of living persons, in the Hebrides, in cases of murrain among cattle.

blood or blemish. Hence, Torquil of the Oak argued that the presence of the fated person was necessary to insure the victory. 'So much I am possessed of this,' said the forester, 'that unless Eachin fight in his place in the ranks of the Clan Quhele, neither I, his foster father, nor any of my eight sons, will lift a weapon in the quarrel.'

"This speech was received with much alarm; for the defection of nine men, the stoutest of their tribe, would be a serious blow, more especially if the combat, as begins to be rumoured, should be decided by a small number from each side. The ancient superstition concerning the foster son of the White Doe was counterbalanced by a new and later prejudice, and the father took the opportunity of presenting to the clan his long-hidden son, whose youthful, but handsome and animated countenance, haughty carriage, and active limbs, excited the admiration of the clansmen, who joyfully received him as the heir and descendant of their Chief, notwithstanding the ominous presage attending his birth and nurture.

"From this tale, my lord," continued Simon Glover, "your lordship may easily conceive why I myself should be secure of a good reception among the Clan Quhele; and you may also have reason to judge that it would be very rash in me to carry Catharine thither. And this, noble lord, is the heaviest of my troubles."

"We shall lighten the load, then," said Sir Patrick; "and, good Glover, I will take risk for thee and this damsel. My alliance with the Douglas gives me some interest with Marjory, Duchess of Rothsay, his daughter, the neglected wife of our wilful Prince. Rely on it, good Glover, that in her retinue thy daughter will be as secure as in a fenced castle. The Duchess keeps house now at Falkland, a castle which the Duke of Albany, to whom it belongs, has lent to her for her accommodation. I cannot promise you pleasure, Fair Maiden; for the Duchess Marjory of Rothsay is unfortunate, and therefore splenetic, haughty, and overbearing; conscious of the want of attractive qualities, therefore jealous of those women who possess them. But she is firm in faith, and noble in spirit, and would fling Pope or prelate into the ditch of her castle, who should come to arrest any one under her protection. You will therefore have absolute safety, though you may lack comfort."

"I have no title to more," said Catharine; "and deeply do I feel the kindness that is willing to secure me such honourable protection. If she be haughty, I will remember she is a Douglas, and hath right, as being such, to entertain as much pride as may become a mortal—if she be fretful, I will recollect that she is unfortunate—and if she be unreasonably captious, I will not forget that she is my protectress. Heed no longer for me, my lord, when you have placed me under the noble lady's charge. But my poor father, to be exposed amongst these wild and dangerous people!"

"Think not of that, Catharine," said the Glover; "I am as familiar

with brogues and bracken as if I had worn them myself. I have only to fear that the decisive battle may be fought before I can leave this country; and if the Clan Quhele lose the combat, I may suffer by the ruin of my protectors."

"We must have that cared for," said Sir Patrick; "rely on my looking out for your safety. But which party will carry the day, think you?"

"Frankly, my Lord Provost, I believe the Clan Chattan will have the worse; these nine children of the forest form a third nearly of the band surrounding the Chief of Clan Quhele, and are redoubted champions."

"And your apprentice, will he stand to it, thinkest thou?"

"He is hot as fire, Sir Patrick," answered the Glover; "but he is also unstable as water. Nevertheless, if he is spared, he seems likely to be one day a brave man."

"But, as now, he has some of the White Doe's milk still lurking about his liver, ha, Simon?"

"He has little experience, my lord," said the Glover, "and I need not tell an honoured warrior like yourself, that danger must be familiar to us ere we can dally with it like a mistress."

This conversation brought them speedily to the Castle of Kinfauns, where, after a short refreshment, it was necessary that the father and the daughter should part, in order to seek their respective places of refuge. It was then first, as she saw that her father's anxiety on her account had drowned all recollections of his friend, that Catharine dropped, as if in a dream, the name of "Henry Gow."

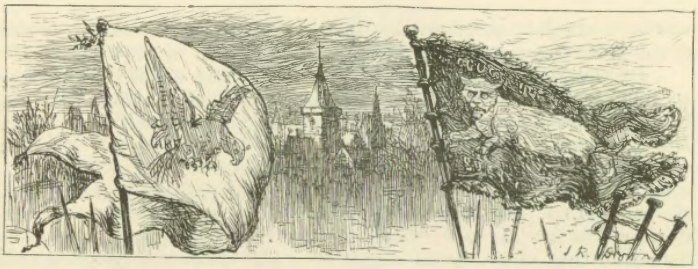
"True, most true," continued her father; "we must possess him of our purposes."

"Leave that to me," said Sir Patrick. "I will not trust to a messenger, nor will I send a letter, because, if I could write one, I think he could not read it. He will suffer anxiety in the meanwhile, but I will ride to Perth to-morrow by times, and acquaint him with your designs."

The time of separation now approached. It was a bitter moment; but the manly character of the old burgher, and the devout resignation of Catharine to the will of Providence, made it lighter than might have been expected. The good Knight hurried the departure of the burgess, but in the kindest manner; and even went so far as to offer him some gold pieces in loan, which might, where specie was so scarce, be considered as the *ne plus ultra* of regard. The Glover, however, assured him he was amply provided, and departed on his journey in a north-westerly direction. The hospitable protection of Sir Patrick Charteris was no less manifested towards his fair guest. She was placed under the charge of a duenna, who managed the good Knight's household, and was compelled to remain several days in Kinfauns, owing to the obstacles and delays interposed by a Tay

boatman, named Kitt Stenshaw, to whose charge she was to be committed, and whom the Provost highly trusted.

Thus were severed the child and parent in a moment of great danger and difficulty, much augmented by circumstances of which they were then ignorant, and which seemed greatly to diminish any chance of safety that remained for them.



CHAPTER XXVII.

"This Austin humbly did."—"Did he?" quoth he.
"Austin may do the same again for me."
POPE'S *Prologue to Canterbury Tales from Chaucer.*

THE course of our story will be best pursued by attending that of Simon Glover. It is not our purpose to indicate the exact local boundaries of the two contending clans, especially since they were not clearly pointed out by the historians who have transmitted accounts of this memorable feud. It is sufficient to say, that the territory of the Clan Chattan extended far and wide, comprehending Caithness and Sutherland, and having for their paramount chief the powerful Earl of the latter shire, thence called *Mohr ar chat.** In this general sense, the Keiths, the Sinclairs, the Guns, and other families and clans of great power, were included in the confederacy. These, however, were not engaged in the present quarrel, which was limited to that part of the Clan Chattan occupying the extensive mountainous districts of Perthshire and Inverness-shire, which form a large portion of what is called the north-eastern Highlands. It is well known that two large septs, unquestionably known to belong to the Clan Chattan, the MacPhersons and the MacIntoshes, dispute to this day which of their chieftains was at the head of this Badenoch branch of the great confederacy, and both have of later times assumed the title of Captain of Clan Chattan. *Non*

* *i.e.*, The Great Cat. The County of Caithness is supposed to have its name from Teutonic settlers of the race of the *Catti*, and heraldry has not neglected so fair an occasion for that species of painted punning in which she used to delight. *Touch not the cat but a glove*, is the motto of Mackintosh, alluding to his crest, which, as with most of the now scattered septs of the old Clan Chattan, is the Mountain Cat.

nostrum est—But, at all events, Badenoch must have been the centre of the confederacy, so far as involved in the feud of which we treat.

Of the rival league of Clan Quhele we have a still less distinct account, for reasons which will appear in the sequel. Some authors have identified them with the numerous and powerful sept of MacKay. If this is done on good authority, which is to be doubted, the MacKays must have shifted their settlements greatly since the reign of Robert III., since they are now to be found (as a clan) in the extreme northern parts of Scotland, in the counties of Ross and Sutherland.* We cannot, therefore, be so clear as we would wish in the geography of the story. Suffice it, that directing his course in a north-westerly direction, the Glover travelled for a day's journey in the direction of the Breadalbane country, from which he hoped to reach the Castle where Gilchrist MacIan, the Captain of the Clan Quhele, and the father of his pupil Conachar, usually held his residence, with a barbarous pomp of attendance and ceremonial, suited to his lofty pretensions.

We need not stop to describe the toil and terrors of such a journey, where the path was to be traced among wastes and mountains, now ascending precipitous ravines, now plunging into inextricable bogs, and often intersected with large brooks, and even rivers. But all these perils Simon Glover had before encountered, in quest of honest gain; and it was not to be supposed that he shunned or feared them where liberty, and life itself, were at stake.

The danger from the warlike and uncivilized inhabitants of these wilds would have appeared to another at least as formidable as the perils of the journey. But Simon's knowledge of the manners and language of the people assured him on this point also. An appeal to the hospitality of the wildest Gael was never unsuccessful; and the kern, that in other circumstances would have taken a man's life for the silver button of his cloak, would deprive himself of a meal to relieve the traveller who implored hospitality at the door of his bothy. The art of travelling in the Highlands was to appear as confident and defenceless as possible; and accordingly the Glover carried no arms whatever, journeyed without the least appearance of precaution, and took good care to exhibit nothing which might excite cupidity. Another rule which he deemed it prudent to observe, was to avoid communication with any of the passengers whom he might chance to meet, except in the interchange of the common civilities of salutation, which the Highlanders rarely omit. Few opportunities occurred of exchanging even such passing greetings. The country, always lonely, seemed now entirely forsaken; and even in the little straths or valleys which he had occasion to pass or traverse, the hamlets were deserted, and the inhabitants had betaken themselves to woods and caves. This was

* Their territory, commonly called, after the chief of the MacKays, *Lord Reay's* country, has lately passed into the possession of the noble family of Stafford-Sutherland.

easily accounted for, considering the imminent dangers of a feud, which all expected would become one of the most general signals for plunder and ravage that had ever distracted that unhappy country.

Simon began to be alarmed at this state of desolation. He had made a halt since he left Kinfauns, to allow his nag some rest; and now he began to be anxious how he was to pass the night. He had reckoned upon spending it at the cottage of an old acquaintance, called Niel Booshalloch, (or the Cow-herd,) because he had charge of numerous herds of cattle belonging to the Captain of Clan Quhele, for which purpose he had a settlement on the banks of the Tay, not far from the spot where it leaves the lake of the same name. From this his old host and friend, with whom he had transacted many bargains for hides and furs, the old Glover hoped to learn the present state of the country, the prospect of peace or war, and the best measures to be taken for his own safety. It will be remembered that the news of the indentures of battle entered into for diminishing the extent of the feud had only been communicated to King Robert the day before the Glover left Perth, and did not become public till some time afterwards.

"If Niel Booshalloch hath left his dwelling like the rest of them, I shall be finely holped up," thought Simon, "since I want not only the advantage of his good advice, but also his interest with Gilchrist MacIan; and, moreover, a night's quarters and a supper."

Thus reflecting, he reached the top of a swelling green hill, and saw the splendid vision of Loch Tay lying beneath him, an immense plate of polished silver, its dark heathy mountains and leafless thickets of oak serving as an arabesque frame to a magnificent mirror.

Indifferent to natural beauty at any time, Simon Glover was now particularly so; and the only part of the splendid landscape on which he turned his eye was the angle or loop of meadow land, where the river Tay, rushing in full-swoln dignity from its parent lake, and wheeling around a beautiful valley of about a mile in breadth, begins his broad course to the south-eastward, like a conqueror and a legislator, to subdue and to enrich remote districts. Upon the sequestered spot, which is so beautifully situated between lake, mountain, and river, arose afterwards the feudal castle of The Ballough,* which in our time has been succeeded by the splendid palace of the Earls of Breadalbane.

But the Campbells, though they had already attained very great power in Argyleshire, had not yet extended themselves so far eastward as Loch Tay, the banks of which were, either by right, or by mere occupancy, possessed for the present by the Clan Quhele, whose choicest herds were fattened on the margin of the lake. In this valley, therefore, between the river and the lake, amid extensive forests of oak-wood, hazel, rowan-tree, and larches, arose the humble cottage of Niel Booshalloch, a village Eumæus, whose hospitable chimneys were seen to smoke plentifully, to the great encouragement of Simon Glover, who

* *Balloch* is Gaelic for the discharge of a lake into a river.

might otherwise have been obliged to spend the night in the open air, to his no small discomfort.

He reached the door of the cottage, whistled, shouted, and made his approach known. There was a baying of hounds and collies, and presently the master of the hut came forth. There was much care on his brow, and he seemed surprised at the sight of Simon Glover, though the herdsman covered both as well as he might; for nothing in that region could be reckoned more uncivil, than for the landlord to suffer anything to escape him in look or gesture, which might induce the visitor to think that his arrival was an unpleasing, or even an unexpected incident. The traveller's horse was conducted to a stable, which was almost too low to receive him, and the Glover himself was led into the mansion of the Booshalloch, where, according to the custom of the country, bread and cheese was placed before the wayfarer, while more solid food was preparing. Simon, who understood all their habits, took no notice of the obvious marks of sadness on the brow of his entertainer, and on those of the family, until he had eaten somewhat for form's sake; after which he asked the general question, Was there any news in the country?

"Bad news as ever were told," said the herdsman; "our father is no more."

"How?" said Simon, greatly alarmed, "is the Captain of the Clan Quhele dead?"

"The Captain of the Clan Quhele never dies," answered the Booshalloch; "but Gilchrist MacIan died twenty hours since, and his son, Eachin MacIan, is now Captain."

"What, Eachin—that is Conachar—my apprentice?"

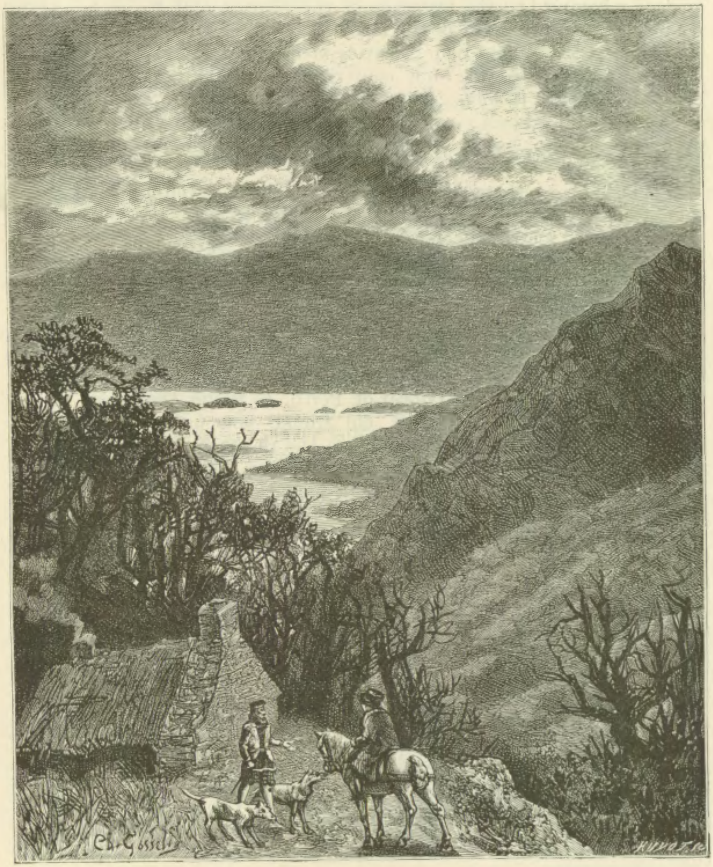
"As little of that subject as you list, brother Simon," said the herdsman. "It is to be remembered, friend, that your craft, which doth very well for a living in the douce city of Perth, is something too mechanical to be much esteemed at the foot of Ben Lawers, and on the banks of Loch Tay. We have not a Gaelic word by which we can even name a maker of gloves."

"It would be strange if you had, friend Niel," said Simon, dryly, "having so few gloves to wear. I think there be none in the whole Clan Quhele, save those which I myself gave to Gilchrist MacIan, whom God assoilzie, who esteemed them a choice propine. Most deeply do I regret his death, for I was coming to him on express business."

"You had better turn the nag's head southward with morning light," said the herdsman. "The funeral is instantly to take place, and it must be with short ceremony; for there is a battle to be fought by the Clan Quhele and the Clan Chattan, thirty champions on a side, as soon as Palm Sunday next, and we have brief time either to lament the dead or honour the living."

"Yet are my affairs so pressing, that I must needs see the young Chief, were it but for a quarter of an hour," said the Glover.

"Hark thee, friend," replied his host. "I think thy business must be either to gather money or to make traffic. Now, if the Chief



Simon learns the news of Gilchrist MacIan's death.

owe thee anything for upbringing or otherwise, ask him not to pay it when all the treasures of the tribe are called in for making gallant preparation of arms and equipment for their combatants, that we may

meet these proud hill-cats in a fashion to show ourselves their superiors. But if thou comest to practise commerce with us, thy time is still worse chosen. Thou knowest that thou art already envied of many of our tribe, for having had the fosterage of the young Chief, which is a thing usually given to the best of the clan."

"But, St. Mary, man!" exclaimed the Glover, "men should remember the office was not conferred on me as a favour which I courted, but that it was accepted by me on importunity and entreaty, to my no small prejudice. This Conachar, or Hector of yours, or whatever you call him, has destroyed me doe-skins to the amount of many pounds Scots."

"There again, now," said the Booshalloch, "you have spoken a word to cost your life;—any allusion to skins or hides, or especially to deer and does, may incur no less a forfeit. The Chief is young, and jealous of his rank—none knows the reason better than thou, friend Glover. He will naturally wish that everything concerning the opposition to his succession, and having reference to his exile, should be totally forgotten; and he will not hold him in affection who shall recall the recollection of his people, or force back his own, upon what they must both remember with pain. Think how, at such a moment, they will look on the old Glover of Perth, to whom the Chief was so long apprentice! Come, come, old friend, you have erred in this. You are in over great haste to worship the rising sun, while his beams are yet level with the horizon. Come thou when he has climbed higher in the heavens, and thou shalt have thy share of the warmth of his noonday height."

"Niel Booshalloch," said the Glover, "we have been old friends, as thou say'st; and as I think thee a true one, I will speak to thee freely, though what I say might be perilous if spoken to others of thy clan. Thou think'st I come hither to make my own profit of thy young Chief, and it is natural thou shouldst think so. But I would not, at my years, quit my own chimney corner in Curfew Street, to bask me in the beams of the brightest sun that ever shone upon Highland heather. The very truth is, I come hither in extremity—my foes have the advantage of me, and have laid things to my charge whereof I am incapable, even in thought. Nevertheless, doom is like to go forth against me, and there is no remedy but that I must up and fly, or remain and perish. I come to your young Chief, as one who had refuge with me in his distress; who ate of my bread and drank of my cup. I ask of him refuge, which, as I trust, I shall need but a short time."

"That makes a different case," replied the herdsman. "So different, that if you came at midnight to the gate of MacIan, having the King of Scotland's head in your hand, and a thousand men in pursuit for the avenging of his blood, I could not think it for his honour to refuse you protection. And for your innocence or guilt, it concerns not

the case,—or rather, he ought the more to shelter you if guilty, seeing your necessity and his risk are both in that case the greater. I must straightway to him, that no hasty tongue tell him of your arriving hither without saying the cause."

"A pity of your trouble," said the Glover; "but where lies the Chief?"

"He is quartered about ten miles hence, busied with the affairs of the funeral, and with preparations for the combat—the dead to the grave, and the living to battle."

"It is a long way, and will take you all night to go and come," said the Glover; "and I am very sure that Conachar, when he knows it is I who——"

"Forget Conachar," said the herdsman, placing his finger on his lips. "And as for the ten miles, they are but a Highland leap, when one bears a message between his friend and his Chief."

So saying, and committing the traveller to the charge of his eldest son and his daughter, the active herdsman left his house two hours before midnight, to which he returned long before sunrise. He did not disturb his wearied guest, but when the old man had arisen in the morning, he acquainted him that the funeral of the late Chieftain was to take place the same day, and that, although Eachin MacIan could not invite a Saxon to the funeral, he would be glad to receive him at the entertainment which was to follow.

"His will must be obeyed," said the Glover, half smiling at the change of relation between himself and his late apprentice. "The man is the master now, and I trust he will remember, that, when matters were otherwise between us, I did not use my authority ungraciously."

"Troutsho, friend!" exclaimed the Booshalloch, "the less of that you say the better. You will find yourself a right welcome guest to Eachin, and the deil a man dare stir you within his bounds. But fare you well, for I must go, as beseems me, to the burial of the best Chief the clan ever had, and the wisest Captain that ever cocked the sweet gale (bog-myrtle) in his bonnet. Farewell to you for a while, and if you will go to the top of the Tom-an-Lonach behind the house, you will see a gallant sight, and hear such a coronach as will reach the top of Ben Lawers. A boat will wait for you, three hours hence, at a wee bit creek about half a mile westward from the head of the Tay."

With these words he took his departure, followed by his three sons, to man the boat in which he was to join the rest of the mourners, and two daughters, whose voices were wanted to join in the Lament, which was chanted, or rather screamed, on such occasions of general affliction.

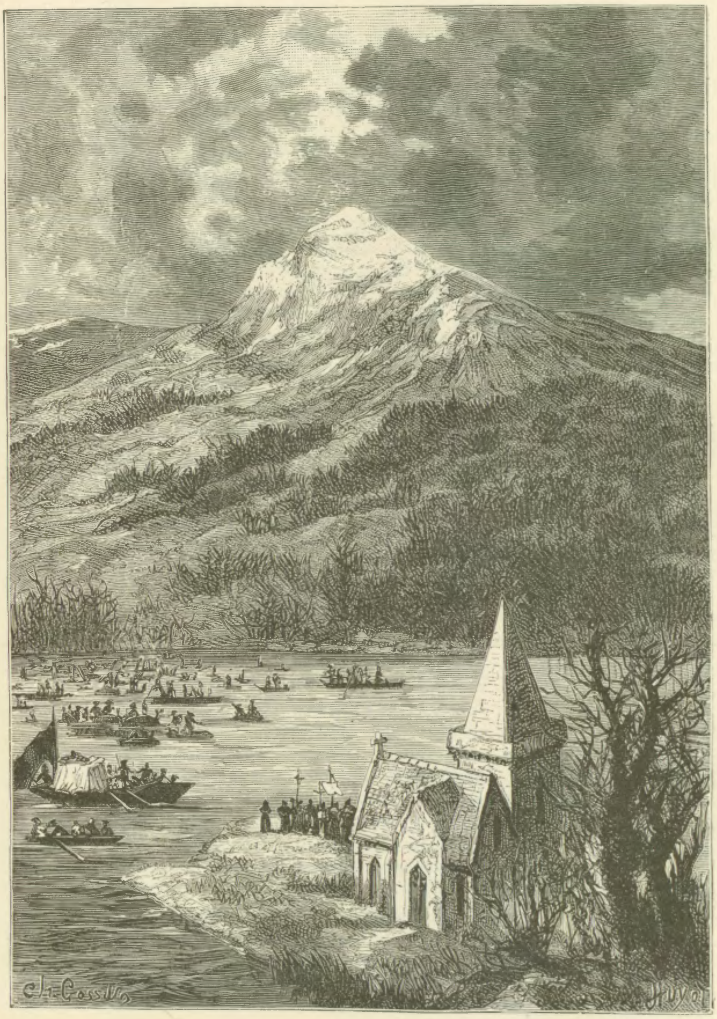
Simon Glover, finding himself alone, resorted to the stable to look after his nag, which, he found, had been well served with graddan, or bread made of scorched barley. Of this kindness he was fully sensible, knowing that, probably, the family had little of this delicacy left to themselves,

until the next harvest should bring them a scanty supply. In animal food they were well provided, and the lake found them abundance of fish for their Lenten diet, which they did not observe very strictly; but bread was a delicacy very scanty in the Highlands. The bogs afforded a soft species of hay, none of the best to be sure, but Scottish horses, like their riders, were then accustomed to hard fare. Gauntlet, for this was the name of the palfrey, had his stall crammed full of dried fern for litter, and was otherwise as well provided for as Highland hospitality could contrive.

Simon Glover being thus left to his own painful reflections, nothing better remained, after having seen after the comforts of the dumb companion of his journey, than to follow the herdsman's advice; and ascending towards the top of an eminence called Tom-an-Lonach, or the Knoll of Yew Trees, after a walk of half an hour he reached the summit, and could look down on the broad expanse of the lake, of which the height commanded a noble view. A few aged and scattered yew-trees, of great size, still vindicated for the beautiful green hill the name attached to it. But a far greater number had fallen a sacrifice to the general demand for bow-staves in that warlike age, the bow being a weapon much used by the mountaineers, though those which they employed, as well as their arrows, were, in shape and form, and especially in efficacy, far inferior to the archery of merry England. The dark and shattered individual yews which remained, were like the veterans of a broken host, occupying in disorder some post of advantage, with the stern purpose of resisting to the last. Behind this eminence, but detached from it, arose a higher hill, partly covered with copse-wood, partly opening into glades of pasture, where the cattle strayed, finding, at this season of the year, a scanty sustenance among the spring-heads and marshy places, where the fresh grass began first to arise.

The opposite, or northern shore of the lake presented a far more Alpine prospect than that upon which the Glover was stationed. Woods and thickets ran up the sides of the mountains, and disappeared among the sinuosities formed by the winding ravines which separated them from each other; but far above these specimens of a tolerable natural soil, arose the swart and bare mountains themselves, in the dark grey desolation proper to the season.

Some were peaked, some broad-crested, some rocky and precipitous, others of a tamer outline; and the clan of Titans seemed to be commanded by their appropriate chieftains—the frowning mountain of Ben Lawers and the still more lofty eminence of Ben Mohr, arising high above the rest, whose peaks retain a dazzling helmet of snow far into the summer season, and sometimes during the whole year. Yet the borders of this wild and silvan region, where the mountains descended upon the lake, intimated, even at that early period, many traces of human habitation. Hamlets were seen, especially on the northern margin of the lake, half hid among the little glens that poured their



The funeral fleet of the Chieftain of Clan Quhele.

tributary streams into Loch Tay, which, like many earthly things, made a fair show at a distance, but, when more closely approached, were disgustful and repulsive, from their squalid want of the conveniences which attend even Indian wigwams. They were inhabited by a race who neither cultivated the earth, nor cared for the enjoyments which industry procures. The women, although otherwise treated with affection, and even delicacy of respect, discharged all the absolutely necessary domestic labour. The men, excepting some reluctant use of an ill-formed plough, or more frequently a spade, grudgingly gone through, as a task infinitely beneath them, took no other employment than the charge of the herds of black cattle, in which their wealth consisted. At all other times, they hunted, fished, or marauded, during the brief intervals of peace, by way of pastime; plundering with bolder licence, and fighting with embittered animosity, in time of war, which, public or private, upon a broader or more restricted scale, formed the proper business of their lives, and the only one which they esteemed worthy of them.

The magnificent bosom of the lake itself was a scene to gaze on with delight. Its noble breadth, with its termination in a full and beautiful run, was rendered yet more picturesque by one of those islets which are often happily situated in the Scottish lakes.* The ruins upon that isle, now almost shapeless, being overgrown with wood, rose, at the time we speak of, into the towers and pinnacles of a priory where slumbered the remains of Sibilla, daughter of Henry I. of England, and consort of Alexander the First of Scotland. This holy place had been deemed of dignity sufficient to be the deposit of the remains of the Captain of the Clan Quhele, at least till times when the removal of the danger, now so imminently pressing, should permit of his body being conveyed to a distinguished convent in the north, where he was destined ultimately to repose with all his ancestry.

A number of boats pushed off from various points of the near and more distant shore, many displaying sable banners, and others having their several pipers in the bow, who from time to time poured forth a few notes of a shrill, plaintive, and wailing character, and intimated to the Glover that the ceremony was about to take place. These sounds of lamentation were but the tuning as it were of the instruments, compared with the general wail which was speedily to be raised.

A distant sound was heard from far up the lake, even as it seemed from the remote and distant glens, out of which the Dochart and the Lochy pour their streams into Loch Tay. It was in a wild inaccessible spot, where the Campbells at a subsequent period founded their strong fortress of Finlayrigg, that the redoubted commander of the Clan Quhele drew his last breath; and, to give due pomp to his funeral, his corpse was now to be brought down the Loch to the island assigned for his temporary place of rest. The funeral fleet, led by the Chieftain's

* Note XVII.

barge, from which a huge black banner was displayed, had made more than two thirds of its voyage ere it was visible from the eminence on which Simon Glover stood to overlook the ceremony. The instant the distant wail of the coronach was heard proceeding from the attendants on the funeral barge, all the subordinate sounds of lamentation were hushed at once, as the raven ceases to croak and the hawk to whistle, whenever the scream of the eagle is heard. The boats, which had floated hither and thither upon the lake, like a flock of water-fowl dispersing themselves on its surface, now drew together with an appearance of order, that the funeral flotilla might pass onward, and that they themselves might fall into their proper places. In the meanwhile the piercing din of the war-pipes became louder and louder, and the cry from the numberless boats which followed that from which the black banner of the Chief was displayed, rose in wild unison up to the Tom-an-Lonach, from which the Glover viewed the spectacle. The galley which headed the procession, bore on its poop a species of scaffold, upon which, arrayed in white linen, and with the face bare, was displayed the corpse of the deceased Chieftain. His son, and the nearest relatives, filled the vessel, while a great number of boats, of every description that could be assembled, either on Loch Tay itself, or brought by land carriage from Loch Earn and otherwise, followed in the rear, some of them of very frail materials. There were even curraghs, composed of ox-hides stretched over hoops of willow, in the manner of the ancient British; and some committed themselves to rafts formed for the occasion, from the readiest materials that occurred, and united in such a precarious manner as to render it probable, that, before the accomplishment of the voyage, some of the clansmen of the deceased might be sent to attend their Chieftain in the world of spirits.

When the principal flotilla came in sight of the smaller groups of boats collected towards the foot of the lake, and bearing off from the little island, they hailed each other with a shout so loud and general, and terminating in a cadence so wildly prolonged, that not only the deer started from their glens for miles around, and sought the distant recesses of the mountains, but even the domestic cattle, accustomed to the voice of man, felt the full panic which the human shout strikes into the wilder tribes, and like them fled from their pastures into morasses and dingles.

Summoned forth from their convent by those sounds, the monks who inhabited the little islet, began to issue from their lowly portal, with cross and banner, and as much of ecclesiastical state as they had the means of displaying; their bells at the same time, of which the edifice possessed three, pealing the death-toll over the long lake, which came to the ears of the now silent multitude, mingled with the solemn chant of the Catholic church, raised by the monks in their procession. Various ceremonies were gone through, while the kindred of the deceased carried the body ashore, and, placing it on a bank long con-

secrated to the purpose, made the Deasil * around the departed. When the corpse was uplifted to be borne into the church, another united yell burst from the assembled multitude, in which the deep shout of warriors, and the shrill wail of females, joined their notes with the tremulous voice of age, and the babbling cry of childhood. The coronach was again, and for the last time, shrieked, as the body was carried into the interior of the church, where only the nearest relatives of the deceased, and the most distinguished of the leaders of the clan, were permitted to enter.† The last yell of woe was so terribly loud, and answered by so many hundred echoes, that the Glover instinctively raised his hands to his ears, to shut out, or deaden at least, a sound so piercing. He kept this attitude, while the hawks, owls, and other birds, scared by the wild scream, had begun to settle in their retreats, when, as he withdrew his hands, a voice, close by him, said,—

Simon meets Father Clement.

"Think you this, Simon Glover, the hymn of penitence and praise, with which it becomes poor forlorn man, cast out from his tenement of clay, to be wafted into the presence of his Maker?"

The Glover turned, and in the old man, with a long white beard, who stood close beside him, had no difficulty, from the clear mild eye, and the benevolent cast of features, to recognize the Carthusian monk Father

* A very ancient custom, which consists in going three times round the body of a dead or living person, imploring blessings upon him. The Deasil must be performed sunways, that is, by moving from right to left. If misfortune is imprecated, the party moves withershins, (German, WIDDERSINS,) that is, *against the Sun*, from left to right.

† Note XVIII.

Clement, no longer wearing his monastic habiliments, but wrapped in a frieze mantle, and having a Highland cap on his head.

It may be recollected that the Glover regarded this man with a combined feeling of respect and dislike—respect, which his judgment could not deny to the monk's person and character, and dislike, which arose from Father Clement's peculiar doctrines being the cause of his daughter's exile and his own distress. It was not, therefore, with sentiments of unmixed satisfaction, that he returned the greetings of the Father, and replied to the reiterated question, What he thought of the funeral rites, which were discharged in so wild a manner,—"I know not, my good Father; but these men do their duty to their deceased Chief according to the fashion of their ancestors; they mean to express their regret for their friend's loss, and their prayers to Heaven in his behalf; and that which is done of good-will, must, to my thinking, be accepted favourably. Had it been otherwise, methinks they had ere now been enlightened to do better."

"Thou art deceived," answered the Monk. "God has sent His light amongst us all, though in various proportions; but man wilfully shuts his eyes and prefers darkness. This benighted people mingle with the ritual of the Roman Church the old heathen ceremonies of their own fathers, and thus unite with the abominations of a church corrupted by wealth and power the cruel and bloody ritual of savage Paynims."

"Father," said Simon, abruptly, "methinks your presence were more useful in yonder chapel, aiding your brethren in the discharge of their clerical duties, than in troubling and unsettling the belief of an humble, though ignorant Christian, like myself."

"And wherefore say, good brother, that I would unfix thy principles of belief?" answered Clement. "So Heaven deal with me, as, were my life-blood necessary to cement the mind of any man to the holy religion he professeth, it should be freely poured out for the purpose."

"Your speech is fair, Father, I grant you," said the Glover; "but if I am to judge the doctrine by the fruits, Heaven has punished me by the hand of the Church, for having hearkened thereto. Ere I heard you, my confessor was little moved, though I might have owned to have told a merry tale upon the ale-bench, even if a friar or a nun were the subject. If at a time I had called Father Hubert a better hunter of hares than of souls, I confessed me to the Vicar Vinesauf, who laughed and made me pay a reckoning for penance—or if I had said that the Vicar Vinesauf was more constant to his cup than to his breviary, I confessed me to Father Hubert, and a new hawking-glove made all well again; and thus I, my conscience, and Mother Church, lived together on terms of peace, friendship, and mutual forbearance. But since I have listened to you, Father Clement, this goodly union is broke to pieces, and nothing is thundered in my ear but purgatory in the next

world, and fire and fagot in this. Therefore, avoid you, Father Clement, or speak to those who can understand your doctrine. I have no heart to be a martyr; I have never in my whole life had courage enough so much as to snuff a candle with my fingers; and, to speak the truth, I am minded to go back to Perth, sue out my pardon in the spiritual court, carry my fagot to the gallows' foot, in token of recantation, and purchase myself once more the name of a good Catholic, were it at the price of all the worldly wealth that remains to me."

"You are angry, my dearest brother," said Clement; "and repent you on the pinch of a little worldly danger, and a little worldly loss, for the good thoughts which you once entertained."

"You speak at ease, Father Clement, since I think you have long forsworn the wealth and goods of the world, and are prepared to yield up your life, when it is demanded, in exchange for the doctrine you preach and believe. You are as ready to put on your pitched shirt and brimstone head-gear, as a naked man is to go to his bed, and it would seem you have not much more reluctance to the ceremony. But I still wear that which clings to me. My wealth is still my own, and I thank Heaven it is a decent pittance whereon to live—my life, too, is that of a hale old man of sixty, who is in no haste to bring it to a close—and if I were poor as Job, and on the edge of the grave, must I not still cling to my daughter, whom your doctrines have already cost so dear?"

"Thy daughter, friend Simon," said the Carmelite, "may be truly called an angel upon earth."

"Ay; and by listening to your doctrines, Father, she is now like to be called on to be an angel in heaven, and to be transported thither in a chariot of fire."

"Nay, my good brother," said Clement, "desist, I pray you, to speak of what you little understand. Since it is wasting time to show thee the light that thou chafest against, yet listen to that which I have to say touching thy daughter, whose temporal felicity, though I weigh it not even for an instant in the scale against that which is spiritual, is, nevertheless, in its order, as dear to Clement Blair as to her own father."

The tears stood in the old man's eyes as he spoke, and Simon Glover was in some degree mollified as he again addressed him.

"One would think thee, Father Clement, the kindest and most amiable of men; how comes it then that thy steps are haunted by general ill-will, wherever thou chancest to turn them? I could lay my life thou hast contrived already to offend yonder half score of poor friars in their water-girdled cage, and that you have been prohibited from attendance on the funeral."

"Even so, my son," said the Carthusian, "and I doubt whether their malice will suffer me to remain in this country. I did but speak a few sentences about the superstition and folly of frequenting St.

Fillian's church, to detect theft by means of his bell—of bathing mad patients in his pool, to cure their infirmity of mind—and lo! the persecutors have cast me forth of their communion, as they will speedily cast me out of this life."

"Lo, you there now," said the Glover, "see what it is for a man that cannot take a warning! Well, Father Clement, men will not cast me forth unless it were as a companion of yours. I pray you, therefore, tell me what you have to say of my daughter, and let us be less neighbours than we have been."

"This then, brother Simon, I have to acquaint you with. This young Chief, who is swoln with contemplation of his own power and glory, loves one thing better than it all, and that is thy daughter."

"He, Conachar!" exclaimed Simon. "My runagate apprentice look up to my daughter!"

"Alas!" said Clement, "how close sits our worldly pride, even as ivy clings to the wall, and cannot be separated! Look *up* to thy daughter, good Simon? Alas, no! The Captain of Clan Quhele, great as he is, and greater as he soon expects to be, looks *down* to the daughter of the Perth burgess, and considers himself demeaned in doing so. But, to use his own profane expression, Catharine is dearer to him than life here, and Heaven hereafter—he cannot live without her."

"Then he may die, if he lists," said Simon Glover, "for she is betrothed to an honest burgess of Perth; and I would not break my word to make my daughter bride to the Prince of Scotland."

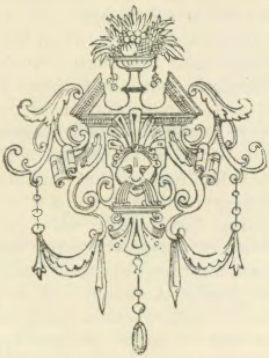
"I thought it would be your answer," replied the Monk; "I would, worthy friend, thou couldst carry into thy spiritual concerns some part of that daring and resolved spirit with which thou canst direct thy temporal affairs."

"Hush thee—hush, Father Clement!" answered the Glover; "when thou fallest into that vein of argument, thy words savour of blazing tar, and that is a scent I like not. As to Catharine, I must manage as I can, so as not to displease the young dignitary; but well is it for me that she is far beyond his reach."

"She must then be distant indeed," said the Carmelite. "And now, brother Simon, since you think it perilous to own me and my opinions, I must walk alone with my own doctrines, and the dangers they draw on me. But should your eye, less blinded than it now is by worldly hopes and fears, ever turn a glance back on him, who soon may be snatched from you, remember, that by nought, save a deep sense of the truth and importance of the doctrine which he taught, could Clement Blair have learned to encounter, nay, to provoke, the animosity of the powerful and inveterate, to alarm the fears of the jealous and timid, to walk in the world as he belonged not to it, and to be accounted mad of men, that he might, if possible, win souls to God. Heaven be my witness, that I would comply in all lawful things, to conciliate the

love and sympathy of my fellow-creatures! It is no light thing to be shunned by the worthy as an infected patient; to be persecuted by the Pharisees of the day as an unbelieving heretic; to be regarded with horror at once and contempt by the multitude, who consider me as a madman, who may be expected to turn mischievous. But were all those evils multiplied an hundred-fold, the fire within must not be stifled, the voice which says within me—Speak, must receive obedience. Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel, even should I at length preach it from amidst the pile of flames!"

So spoke this bold witness; one of those whom Heaven raised up from time to time, to preserve amidst the most ignorant ages, and to carry down to those which succeed them, a manifestation of unadulterated Christianity, from the time of the Apostles to the age when, favoured by the invention of printing, the Reformation broke out in full splendour. The selfish policy of the Glover was exposed in his own eyes; and he felt himself contemptible as he saw the Carmelite turn from him in all the hallowedness of resignation. He was even conscious of a momentary inclination to follow the example of the preacher's philanthropy and disinterested zeal; but it glanced like a flash of lightning through a dark vault, where there lies nothing to catch the blaze; and he slowly descended the hill, in a direction different from that of the Carthusian, forgetting him and his doctrines, and buried in anxious thoughts about his child's fate and his own.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

"What want these outlaws conquerors should have,
But History's purchased page to call them great,
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave."

BYRON.

THE funeral obsequies being over, the same flotilla which had proceeded in solemn and sad array down the lake, prepared to return with displayed banners, and every demonstration of mirth and joy; for there was but brief time to celebrate festivals, when the awful conflict betwixt the Clan Quhele and their most formidable rivals so nearly approached. It had been agreed, therefore, that the funeral feast should be blended with that usually given at the inauguration of the young Chief.

Some objections were made to this arrangement, as containing an evil omen. But, on the other hand, it had a species of recommendation, from the habits and feelings of the Highlanders, who, to this day, are wont to mingle a degree of solemn mirth with their mourning, and something resembling melancholy with their mirth. The usual aversion to speak or think of those who have been beloved and lost, is less known to this grave and enthusiastic race, than it is to others. You hear not only the young mention (as is everywhere usual) the merits and the character of parents, who have, in the course of nature, predeceased them; but the widowed partner speaks, in ordinary conversation, of the lost spouse, and, what is still stranger, the parents allude frequently to the beauty or valour of the child whom they have interred. The Scottish Highlanders appear to regard the separation of friends by death, as something less absolute and complete than it is generally esteemed in other countries, and converse of the dear connec-

tions, who have sought the grave before them, as if they had gone upon a long journey in which they themselves must soon follow. The funeral feast, therefore, being a general custom throughout Scotland, was not, in the opinion of those who were to share it, unseemingly mingled, on the present occasion, with the festivities which hailed the succession to the Chieftainship.

The barge which had lately borne the dead to the grave, now conveyed the young MacIan to his new command; and the minstrels sent forth their gayest notes to gratulate Eachin's succession, as they had lately sounded their most doleful dirges when carrying Gilchrist to his grave. From the attendant flotilla rang notes of triumph and jubilee, instead of those yells of lamentation, which had so lately disturbed the echoes of Loch Tay; and a thousand voices hailed the youthful Chieftain as he stood on the poop, armed at all points, in the flower of early manhood, beauty and activity, on the very spot where his father's corpse had so lately been extended, and surrounded by triumphant friends, as that had been by desolate mourners. One boat kept closest of the flotilla to the honoured galley. Torquil of the Oak, a grizzled giant, was steersman; and his eight sons, each exceeding the ordinary stature of mankind, pulled the oars. Like some powerful and favourite wolf-hound, unloosed from his couples, and frolicking around a liberal master, the boat of the foster brethren passed the Chieftain's barge, now on one side, and now on another, and even rowed around it, as if in extravagance of joy; while, at the same time, with the jealous vigilance of the animal we have compared it to, they made it dangerous for any other of the flotilla to approach so near as themselves, from the risk of being run down by their impetuous and reckless manœuvres. Raised to an eminent rank in the clan by the succession of their foster brother to the command of the Clan Quhele, this was the tumultuous and almost terrible mode in which they testified their peculiar share in their Chief's triumph.

Far behind, and with different feelings, on the part of one at least of the company, came the small boat, in which, manned by the Booshalloch and one of his sons, Simon Glover was a passenger.

"If we are bound for the head of the lake," said Simon to his friend, "we shall hardly be there for hours."

But as he spoke, the crew of the boat of the foster brethren, or Leichtach,* on a signal from the Chief's galley, lay on their oars until the Booshalloch's boat came up, and throwing on board a rope of hides, which Niel made fast to the head of his skiff, they stretched to their oars once more; and, notwithstanding they had the small boat in tow, swept through the lake with almost the same rapidity as before. The skiff was tugged on with a velocity which seemed to hazard the pulling her under water, or the separation of her head from her other timbers.

Simon Glover saw with anxiety the reckless fury of their course,

* *I. e.* Body-guard.

and the bows of the boat occasionally brought within an inch or two of the level of the water; and though his friend Niel Booshalloch assured him it was all done in especial honour, he heartily wished his voyage might have a safe termination. It had so, and much sooner than he apprehended; for the place of festivity was not four miles distant from the sepulchral island, being chosen to suit the Chieftain's course, which lay to the south-east, so soon as the banquet should be concluded.

A bay on the southern side of Loch Tay presented a beautiful beach of sparkling sand, on which the boats might land with ease, and a dry meadow, covered with turf, verdant considering the season, behind and around which rose high banks, fringed with copsewood, and displaying the lavish preparations which had been made for the entertainment.

The Highlanders, well known for ready hatchet-men, had constructed a long arbour or silvan banqueting-room, capable of receiving two hundred men, while a number of smaller huts around seemed intended for sleeping apartments. The uprights, the couples, and rooftree of the temporary hall, were composed of mountain-pine, still covered with its bark. The frame-work of the sides was of planks or spars of the same material, closely interwoven with the leafy boughs of the fir and other evergreens, which the neighbouring woods afforded, while the hills had furnished plenty of heath to form the roof. Within this silvan palace the most important personages present were invited to hold high festival. Others of less note were to feast in various long sheds, constructed with less care; and tables of sod, or rough planks, placed in the open air, were allotted to the numberless multitude. At a distance were to be seen piles of glowing charcoal or blazing wood, around which countless cooks toiled, bustled, and fretted, like so many demons working in their native element. Pits, wrought in the hill-side, and lined with heated stones, served as ovens for stewing immense quantities of beef, mutton, and venison—wooden spits supported sheep and goats, which were roasted entire; others were cut into joints, and seethed in caldrons made of the animals' own skins, sewed hastily together and filled with water; while huge quantities of pike, trout, salmon, and char, were broiled with more ceremony on glowing embers. The Glover had seen many a Highland banquet, but never one the preparations for which were on such a scale of barbarous profusion.

He had little time, however, to admire the scene around him; for, as soon as they landed on the beach, the Booshalloch observed with some embarrassment, that as they had not been bidden to the table of the dais, to which he seemed to have expected an invitation, they had best secure a place in one of the inferior bothies or booths; and was leading the way in that direction, when he was stopped by one of the body-guards, seeming to act as master of ceremonies, who whispered something in his ear.

"I thought so," said the herdsman, much relieved, "I thought

neither the stranger, nor the man that has my charge, would be left out at the high table."

They were conducted accordingly into the ample lodge, within

The young Chieftain's inaugural feast.

which were long ranges of tables already mostly occupied by the guests, while those who acted as domestics were placing upon them the abundant though rude materials of the festival. The young Chief, although he certainly saw the Glover and the herdsman enter, did not

address any personal salute to either, and their places were assigned them in a distant corner, far beneath the Salt, (a huge piece of antique silver-plate,) the only article of value that the table displayed, and which was regarded by the Clan as a species of palladium, only produced and used on the most solemn occasions, such as the present.

The Booshalloch, somewhat discontented, muttered to Simon as he took his place—"These are changed days, friend. His father, rest his soul, would have spoken to us both; but these are bad manners which he has learned among you Sassenachs in the Low Country."

To this remark the Glover did not think it necessary to reply; instead of which he adverted to the evergreens and particularly to the skins and other ornaments with which the interior of the bower was decorated. The most remarkable part of these ornaments was a number of Highland shirts of mail, with steel-bonnets, battle-axes, and two-handed swords to match, which hung around the upper part of the room, together with targets highly and richly embossed. Each mail shirt was hung over a well-dressed stag's hide, which at once displayed the armour to advantage, and saved it from suffering by damp.

"These," whispered the Booshalloch, "are the arms of the chosen champions of the Clan Quhele. They are twenty-nine in number, as you see, Eachin himself being the thirtieth, who wears his armour to-day, else had there been thirty. And he has not got such a good hauberk after all, as he should wear on Palm Sunday. These nine suits of harness, of such large size, are for the Leichtach, from whom so much is expected."

"And these goodly deer-hides," said Simon, the spirit of his profession awakening at the sight of the goods in which he traded,—"think you the Chief will be disposed to chaffer for them? They are in demand for the doublets which knights wear under their armour."

"Did I not pray you," said Niel Booshalloch, "to say nothing on that subject?"

"It is the mail shirts I speak of," said Simon,—"may I ask if any of them were made by our celebrated Perth armourer, called Henry of the Wynd?"

"Thou art more unlucky than before," said Niel; "that man's name is to Eachin's temper like a whirlwind upon the lake; yet no man knows for what cause."

"I can guess," thought our Glover, but gave no utterance to the thought; and having twice lightened on unpleasant subjects of conversation, he prepared to apply himself, like those around him, to his food, without starting another topic.

We have said as much of the preparations as may lead the reader to conclude that the festival, in respect of the quality of the food, was of the most rude description, consisting chiefly of huge joints of meat, which were consumed with little respect to the fasting season, although several of the friars of the Island Convent graced and hallowed the

board by their presence. The platters were of wood, and so were the hooped cogues or cups, out of which the guests quaffed their liquor, as also the broth or juice of the meat, which was held a delicacy. There were also various preparations of milk which were highly esteemed, and were eaten out of similar vessels. Bread was the scarcest article at the banquet, but the Glover and his patron Niel were served with two small loaves expressly for their own use. In eating, as indeed was then the case all over Britain, the guests used their knives called skenes, or the large poniards named dirks, without troubling themselves by the reflection that they might occasionally have served different or more fatal purposes.

At the upper end of the table stood a vacant seat, elevated a step or two above the floor. It was covered with a canopy of hollow boughs and ivy, and there rested against it a sheathed sword and a folded banner. This had been the seat of the deceased Chieftain, and was left vacant in honour of him. Eachin occupied a lower chair on the right hand of the place of honour.

The reader would be greatly mistaken who should follow out this description, by supposing that the guests behaved like a herd of hungry wolves, rushing upon a feast rarely offered to them. On the contrary, the Clan Quhele conducted themselves with that species of courteous reserve and attention to the wants of others, which is often found in primitive nations, especially such as are always in arms; because a general observance of the rules of courtesy is necessary to prevent quarrels, bloodshed, and death. The guests took the places assigned them by Torquil of the Oak, who, acting as Marischal *Taeh*, *i.e.* sewer of the mess, touched with a white wand, without speaking a word, the place where each was to sit. Thus placed in order, the company patiently waited for the portion assigned them, which was distributed among them by the Leichtach; the bravest men, or more distinguished warriors of the tribe, being accommodated with a double mess, emphatically called *bieyfir*, or the portion of a man. When the sewers themselves had seen every one served, they resumed their places at the festival, and were each served with one of these larger messes of food. Water was placed within each man's reach, and a handful of soft moss served the purposes of a table-napkin, so that, as at an Eastern banquet, the hands were washed as often as the mess was changed. For amusement, the bard recited the praises of the deceased Chief, and expressed the clan's confidence in the blossoming virtues of his successor. The Seanachie recited the genealogy of the tribe, which they traced to the race of the Dalriads; the harpers played within, while the war-pipes cheered the multitude without. The conversation among the guests was grave, subdued, and civil—no jest was attempted beyond the bounds of a very gentle pleasantry, calculated only to excite a passing smile. There were no raised voices, no contentious arguments; and Simon Glover had heard a hundred times more noise at a guild-

feast in Perth, than was made on this occasion by two hundred wild mountaineers.

Even the liquor itself did not seem to raise the festive party above the same tone of decorous gravity. It was of various kinds—wine appeared in very small quantities, and was served out only to the principal guests, among which honoured number Simon Glover was again included. The wine and the two wheaten loaves were indeed the only marks of notice which he received during the feast; but Niel Booshalloch, jealous of his master's reputation for hospitality, failed not to enlarge on them as proofs of high distinction. Distilled liquors, since so generally used in the Highlands, were then comparatively unknown. The usquebaugh was circulated in small quantities, and was highly flavoured with a decoction of saffron and other herbs, so as to resemble a medicinal potion, rather than a festive cordial. Cider and mead were seen at the entertainment, but ale, brewed in great quantities for the purpose, and flowing round without restriction, was the liquor generally used, and that was drunk with a moderation much less known among the more modern Highlanders. A cup to the memory of the deceased Chieftain was the first pledge solemnly proclaimed after the banquet was finished; and a low murmur of benedictions was heard from the company, while the monks alone uplifted their united voices, sung *Requiem eternam dona.* An unusual silence followed, as if something extraordinary was expected, when Eachin arose, with a bold and manly yet modest grace, and ascended the vacant seat or throne, saying with dignity and firmness,—

"This seat, and my father's inheritance, I claim as my right—so prosper me God and St. Barr!"

"How will you rule your father's children?" said an old man, the uncle of the deceased.

"I will defend them with my father's sword, and distribute justice to them under my father's banner."

The old man, with a trembling hand, unsheathed the ponderous weapon, and holding it by the blade, offered the hilt to the young Chieftain's grasp; at the same time Torquil of the Oak unfurled the pennon of the tribe, and swung it repeatedly over Eachin's head, who, with singular grace and dexterity, brandished the huge claymore as in its defence. The guests raised a yelling shout, to testify their acceptance of the patriarchal Chief who claimed their allegiance, nor was there any who, in the graceful and agile youth before them, was disposed to recollect the subject of sinister vaticinations. As he stood in glittering mail, resting on the long sword, and acknowledging by gracious gestures the acclamations which rent the air within, without, and around, Simon Glover was tempted to doubt whether this majestic figure was that of the same lad whom he had often treated with little ceremony, and began to have some apprehension of the consequences of having done so. A general burst of minstrelsy succeeded to

the acclamations, and rock and greenwood rang to harp and pipes, as lately to shout and yell of woe.

It would be tedious to pursue the progress of the inaugural feast, or detail the pledges that were quaffed to former heroes of the clan, and above all to the twenty-nine brave Gallowglasses who were to

Torquil of the Oak unfurling the banner.

fight in the approaching conflict, under the eye and leading of their young Chief. The bards, assuming, in old times, the prophetic character combined with their own, ventured to assure them of the most distinguished victory, and to predict the fury with which the Blue Falcon, the emblem of the Clan Quhele, should rend to pieces the Mountain-cat, the well-known badge of the Clan Chattan.

It was approaching sunset, when a bowl, called the grace-cup, made of oak, hooped with silver, was handed round the table as the signal of dispersion, although it was left free to any who chose a longer carouse to retreat to any of the outer bothies. As for Simon Glover, the Booshalloch conducted him to a small hut, contrived, it would seem, for the use of a single individual, where a bed of heath and moss was arranged as well as the season would permit, and an ample supply of such delicacies as the late feast afforded showed that all care had been taken for the inhabitant's accommodation.

"Do not leave this hut," said the Booshalloch, taking leave of his friend and protegé; "this is your place of rest. But apartments are lost on such a night of confusion, and if the badger leaves his hole the tod* will creep into it."

To Simon Glover this arrangement was by no means disagreeable. He had been wearied by the noise of the day, and felt desirous of repose. After eating, therefore, a morsel, which his appetite scarce required, and drinking a cup of wine to expel the cold, he muttered his evening prayer, wrapt himself in his cloak, and lay down on a couch which old acquaintance had made familiar and easy to him. The hum and murmur, and even the occasional shouts, of some of the festive multitude who continued revelling without, did not long interrupt his repose; and in about ten minutes he was as fast asleep as if he had lain in his own bed in Curfew Street.

* Tod, *Scottice* for fox.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Still harping on my daughter."

Hamlet.

TWO hours before the black-cock crew, Simon Glover was wakened by a well-known voice, which called him by name.

"What, Conachar!" he replied, as he started from sleep, "is the morning so far advanced?" and raising his eyes, the person of whom he was dreaming stood before him; and at the same moment, the events of yesterday rushing on his recollection, he saw with surprise that the vision retained the form which sleep had assigned it, and it was not the mail-clad Highland Chief, with claymore in hand, as he had seen him the preceding night, but Conachar of Curfew Street, in his humble apprentice's garb, holding in his hand a switch of oak. An apparition would not more have surprised our Perth burgher. As he gazed with wonder, the youth turned upon him a piece of lighted bog-wood which he carried in a lantern, and to his waking exclamation replied,—

"Even so, father Simon; it is Conachar, come to renew our old acquaintance, when our intercourse will attract least notice."

So saying, he sat down on a tressel which answered the purpose of a chair, and placing the lantern beside him, proceeded in the most friendly tone.

"I have tasted of thy good cheer many a day, father Simon—I trust thou hast found no lack in my family?"

"None whatever, Eachin MacIan," answered the Glover,—for the simplicity of the Celtic language and manners rejects all honorary titles; "it was even too good for this fasting season, and much too

good for me, since I must be ashamed to think how hard you fared in Curfew Street."

"Even too well, to use your own word," said Conachar, "for the deserts of an idle apprentice, and for the wants of a young Highlander. But yesterday, if there was, as I trust, enough of food, found you not, good Glover, some lack of courteous welcome? Excuse it not,—I know you did so. But I am young in authority with my people, and I must not too early draw their attention to the period of my residence in the Lowlands, which, however, I can never forget."

"I understand the cause entirely," said Simon; "and therefore it is unwillingly, and as it were by force, that I have made so early a visit hither."

"Hush, father, hush! It is well you are come to see some of my Highland splendour while it yet sparkles. Return after Palm-Sunday, and who knows whom or what you may find in the territories we now possess! The Wild-cat may have made his lodge where the banqueting bower of MacIan now stands."

The young Chief was silent, and pressed the top of the rod to his lips, as if to guard against uttering more.

"There is no fear of that, Eachin," said Simon, in that vague way in which lukewarm comforters endeavour to turn the reflections of their friends from the consideration of inevitable danger.

"There *is* fear, and there is peril of utter ruin," answered Eachin; "and there is positive certainty of great loss. I marvel my father consented to this wily proposal of Albany. I would MacGillie Chattachan would agree with me, and then, instead of wasting our best blood against each other, we would go down together to Strathmore, and kill and take possession. I would rule at Perth, and he at Dundee, and all the Great Strath should be our own to the banks of the Frith of Tay. Such is the policy I have caught from your old grey head, father Simon, when holding a trencher at thy back, and listening to thy evening talk with Bailie Craigdallie."

"The tongue is well called an unruly member," thought the Glover. "Here have I been holding a candle to the devil, to show him the way to mischief."

But he only said aloud, "These plans come too late."

"Too late indeed!" answered Eachin. "The indentures of battle are signed by our marks and seals; the burning hate of the Clan Quhele and Clan Chattan is blown up to an inextinguishable flame by mutual insults and boasts. Yes, the time is passed by. But to thine own affairs, father Glover. It is religion that has brought thee hither, as I learn from Niel Booshalloch. Surely, my experience of thy prudence did not lead me to suspect thee of any quarrel with Mother Church. As for my old acquaintance, Father Clement, he is one of those who hunt after the crown of martyrdom, and think a stake, surrounded with blazing fagots, better worth embracing than a willing

bride. He is a very knight-errant, in defence of his religious notions, and does battle wherever he comes. He hath already a quarrel with the monks of Sibyl's Isle yonder, about some point of doctrine—Hast seen him?"

"I have," answered Simon; "but we spoke little together, the time being pressing."

"He may have said that there is a third person,—one more likely, I think, to be a true fugitive for religion, than either you, a shrewd citizen, or he, a wrangling preacher,—who would be right heartily welcome to share our protection? Thou art dull, man, and wilt not guess my meaning—Thy daughter, Catharine?"

These last words the young Chief spoke in English; and he continued the conversation in that language, as if apprehensive of being overheard; and, indeed, as if under the sense of some involuntary hesitation.

"My daughter Catharine," said the Glover, remembering what the Carthusian had told him, "is well and safe."

"But where, or with whom?" said the young Chief. "And wherefore came she not with you? Think you the Clan Quhele have no caillachs,* as active as old Dorothy, whose hand has warmed my haffits† before now, to wait upon the daughter of their Chieftain's master?"

"Again I thank you," said the Glover, "and doubt neither your power nor your will to protect my daughter, as well as myself. But an honourable lady, the friend of Sir Patrick Charteris, hath offered her a safe place of refuge, without the risk of a toilsome journey through a desolate and distracted country."

"Oh, ay,—Sir Patrick Charteris," said Eachin, in a more reserved and distant tone—"he must be preferred to all men, without doubt; he is your friend, I think?"

Simon Glover longed to punish this affectation of a boy, who had been scolded four times a-day for running into the street to see Sir Patrick Charteris ride past; but he checked his spirit of repartee, and simply said,—

"Sir Patrick Charteris has been Provost of Perth for seven years; and it is likely is so still, since the magistrates are elected, not in Lent, but at St. Martinmas."

"Ah, father Glover," said the youth, in his kinder and more familiar mode of address, "you are so used to see the sumptuous shows and pageants of Perth, that you would but little relish our barbarous festival in comparison. What didst thou think of our ceremonial of yesterday?"

"It was noble and touching," said the Glover; "and to me, who knew your father, most especially so. When you rested on the sword, and looked around you, methought I saw mine old friend

* Old women. † *I.e.*, Boxed my ears.

Gilchrist MacIan arisen from the dead, and renewed in years and in strength."

"I played my part there boldly, I trust; and showed little of that paltry apprentice boy, whom you used to—use just as he deserved."

"Eachin resembles Conachar," said the Glover, "no more than a salmon resembles a par, though men say they are the same fish in a different state; or than a butterfly resembles a grub."

"Thinkest thou that while I was taking upon me the power which all women love, I would have been myself an object for a maiden's eye to rest upon? To speak plain, what would Catharine have thought of me in the ceremonial?"

"We approach the shallows now," thought Simon Glover; "and without nice pilotage, we drive right on shore."

"Most women like show, Eachin; but I think my daughter Catharine be an exception. She would rejoice in the good fortune of her household friend and playmate; but she would not value the splendid MacIan, Captain of Clan Quhele, more than the orphan Conachar."

"She is ever generous and disinterested," replied the young Chief. "But yourself, father, have seen the world for many more years than she has done, and can better form a judgment what power and wealth do for those who enjoy them. Think, and speak sincerely, what would be your own thoughts, if you saw your Catharine standing under yonder canopy, with the command over an hundred hills, and the devoted obedience of ten thousand vassals; and as the price of these advantages, her hand in that of the man who loves her the best in the world?"

"Meaning in your own, Conachar?" said Simon.

"Ay, Conachar call me—I love the name, since it was by that I have been known to Catharine."

"Sincerely, then," said the Glover, endeavouring to give the least offensive turn to his reply, "my inmost thought would be the earnest wish that Catharine and I were safe in our humble booth in Curfew Street, with Dorothy for our only vassal."

"And with poor Conachar also, I trust? You would not leave him to pine away in solitary grandeur?"

"I would not," answered the Glover, "wish so ill to the Clan Quhele, mine ancient friends, as to deprive them, at the moment of emergency, of a brave young Chief, and that Chief of the fame which he is about to acquire at their head in the approaching conflict."

Eachin bit his lip, to suppress his irritated feelings, as he replied, —"Words—words—empty words, father Simon. You fear the Clan Quhele more than you love them, and you suppose their indignation would be formidable, should their Chief marry the daughter of a burgess of Perth."

"And if I do fear such an issue, Hector MacIan, have I not reason? How have ill-assorted marriages had issue in the House of MacCallanmore, in that of the powerful MacLeans, nay, of the Lords of the Isles themselves? What has ever come of them but divorce and exheredation—sometimes worse fate, to the ambitious intruder? You could not marry my child before a priest, and you could only wed her with your left hand; and I"—he checked the strain of impetuosity which the subject inspired, and concluded,—"And I am an honest, though humble burgher of Perth, who would rather my child were the lawful

Eachin confides his terrible secret.

and undoubted spouse of a citizen in my own rank, than the licensed concubine of a monarch."

"I will wed Catharine before the priest and before the world,—before the altar and before the black stones of Iona," said the impetuous young man. "She is the love of my youth, and there is not a tie in religion or honour, but I will bind myself by them! I have sounded my people. If we do but win this combat—and, with the hope of gaining Catharine, we SHALL win it—my heart tells me so—I shall be so much lord over their affections, that were I to take a bride from the almshouse, so it was my pleasure, they would hail her as if she were a

daughter of MacCallanmore. But you reject my suit?" said Eachin, sternly.

"You put words of offence in my mouth," said the old man, "and may next punish me for them, since I am wholly in your power. But with my consent my daughter shall never wed, save in her own degree. Her heart would break amid the constant wars and scenes of bloodshed which connect themselves with your lot. If you really love her, and recollect her dread of strife and combat, you would not wish her to be subjected to the train of military horrors in which you, like your father, must needs be inevitably and eternally engaged. Choose a bride amongst the daughters of the mountain-chiefs, my son, or fiery Lowland nobles. You are fair, young, rich, high-born, and powerful, and will not woo in vain. You will readily find one who will rejoice in your conquests, and cheer you under defeat. To Catharine, the one would be as frightful as the other. A warrior must wear a steel gauntlet—a glove of kid-skin would be torn to pieces in an hour."

A dark cloud passed over the face of the young Chief, lately animated with so much fire.

"Farewell," he said, "the only hope, which could have lighted me to fame or victory!" He remained for a space silent, and intensely thoughtful, with downcast eyes, a lowering brow, and folded arms. At length he raised his hands, and said, "Father,—for such you have been to me,—I am about to tell you a secret. Reason and Pride both advise me to be silent, but Fate urges me, and must be obeyed. I am about to lodge in you the deepest and dearest secret that man ever confided to man. But beware—end this conference how it will—beware how you ever breathe a syllable of what I am now to trust to you; for know, that were you to do so in the most remote corner of Scotland, I have ears to hear it even there, and a hand and poniard to reach a traitor's bosom. I am—but the word will not out!"

"Do not speak it then," said the prudent Glover; "a secret is no longer safe when it crosses the lips of him who owns it; and I desire not a confidence so dangerous as you menace me with."

"Ay, but I must speak, and you must hear," said the youth. "In this age of battle, father, you have yourself been a combatant?"

"Once only," replied Simon, "when the Southron assaulted the Fair City. I was summoned to take my part in the defence, as my tenure required, like that of other craftsmen, who are bound to keep watch and ward."

"And how felt you upon that matter?" inquired the young Chief.

"What can that import to the present business?" said Simon, in some surprise.

"Much, else I had not asked the question," answered Eachin, in the tone of haughtiness which from time to time he assumed.

"An old man is easily brought to speak of olden times," said

Simon, not unwilling, on an instant's reflection, to lead the conversation away from the subject of his daughter, "and I must needs confess, my feelings were much short of the high cheerful confidence, nay, the pleasure, with which I have seen other men go to battle. My life and profession were peaceful, and though I have not wanted the spirit of a man, when the time demanded it, yet I have seldom slept worse than the night before that onslaught. My ideas were harrowed by the tales we were told (nothing short of the truth) about the Saxon archers; how they drew shafts of a cloth-yard length, and used bows a third longer than ours. When I fell into a broken slumber, if but a straw in the mattress pricked my side, I started and waked, thinking an English arrow was quivering in my body. In the morning, as I began for very weariness to sink into some repose, I was waked by the tolling of the common bell, which called us burghers to the walls;—I never heard its sound peal so like a passing knell before or since."

"Go on—what further chanced?" demanded Eachin.

"I did on my harness," said Simon, "such as it was—took my mother's blessing, a high-spirited woman, who spoke of my father's actions for the honour of the Fair Town. This heartened me, and I felt still bolder when I found myself ranked among the other crafts, all bowmen, for thou knowest the Perth citizens have good skill in archery. We were dispersed on the walls, several knights and squires in armour of proof being mingled amongst us, who kept a bold countenance, confident perhaps in their harness, and informed us, for our encouragement, that they would cut down with their swords and axes, any of those who should attempt to quit their post. I was kindly assured of this myself by the old Kempe of Kinfauns, as he was called, this good Sir Patrick's father, then our Provost. He was a grandson of the Red Rover, Tom of Longueville, and a likely man to keep his word, which he addressed to me in especial, because a night of much discomfort may have made me look paler than usual; and besides, I was but a lad."

"And did his exhortation add to your fear, or your resolution?" said Eachin, who seemed very attentive.

"To my resolution," answered Simon; "for I think nothing can make a man so bold to face one danger at some distance in his front, as the knowledge of another close behind him, to push him forward. Well—I mounted the walls in tolerable heart, and was placed with others on the Spey Tower, being accounted a good bowman. But a very cold fit seized me as I saw the English, in great order, with their archers in front, and their men-at-arms behind, marching forward to the attack in strong columns, three in number. They came on steadily, and some of us would fain have shot at them; but it was strictly forbidden, and we were obliged to remain motionless, sheltering ourselves behind the battlement as we best might. As the Southron formed their long ranks into lines, each man occupying his place as by magic,

and preparing to cover themselves by large shields, called pavesses, which they planted before them, I again felt a strange breathlessness, and some desire to go home for a glass of distilled waters. But as I looked aside, I saw the worthy Kempe of Kinfauns bending a large crossbow, and I thought it pity he should waste the bolt on a true-hearted Scotsman, when so many English were in presence; so I e'en staid where I was, being in a comfortable angle, formed by two battlements. The English then strode forward, and drew their bow-strings, —not to the breast, as your Highland kerne do, but to the ear,—and sent off their volleys of swallow-tails before we could call on St. Andrew. I winked when I saw them haul up their tackle, and I believe I started as the shafts began to rattle against the parapet. But looking round me, and seeing none hurt but John Squallit, the town-crier, whose jaws were pierced through with a cloth-yard shaft, I took heart of grace, and shot in my turn with good will and good aim. A little man I shot at, who had just peeped out from behind his target, dropt with a shaft through his shoulder. The Provost cried—'Well stitched, Simon Glover!'—'Saint John, for his own town, my fellow-craftsmen!'—shouted I,—though I was then but an apprentice. And if you will believe me, in the rest of the skirmish, which was ended by the foes drawing off, I drew bowstring and loosed shaft as calmly as if I had been shooting at butts instead of men's breasts. I gained some credit, and I have ever afterwards thought, that in case of necessity, (for with me it had never been matter of choice,) I should not have lost it again. And this is all I can tell of warlike experience in battle. Other dangers I have had, which I have endeavoured to avoid like a wise man, or, when they were inevitable, I have faced them like a true one. Upon other terms a man cannot live or hold up his head in Scotland."

"I understand your tale," said Eachin; "but I shall find it difficult to make you credit mine, knowing the race of which I am descended, and especially that I am the son of him whom we have this day laid in the tomb—well that he lies where he will never learn what you are now to hear! Look, my father—the light which I bear grows short and pale, a few minutes will extinguish it—but before it expires, the hideous tale will be told. Father, I am—a COWARD!—It is said at last, and the secret of my disgrace is in keeping of another!"

The young man sunk back in a species of syncope, produced by the agony of his mind, as he made the fatal communication. The Glover, moved as well by fear as by compassion, applied himself to recall him to life, and succeeded in doing so, but not in restoring him to composure. He hid his face with his hands, and his tears flowed plentifully and bitterly.

"For Our Lady's sake, be composed," said the old man, "and recall the vile word! I know you better than yourself—you are NO coward, but only too young and inexperienced, ay, and somewhat too quick of fancy, to have the steady valour of a bearded man. I would

hear no other man say that of you, Conachar, without giving him the lie. You are no coward—I have seen high sparks of spirit fly from you even on slight enough provocation."

"High sparks of pride and passion!" said the unfortunate youth; "but when saw you them supported by the resolution that should have backed them? The sparks you speak of, fell on my dastardly heart as on a piece of ice which could catch fire from nothing—if my offended pride urged me to strike, my weakness of mind prompted me the next moment to fly."

"Want of habit," said Simon; "it is by clambering over walls that youths learn to scale precipices. Begin with slight feuds—exercise daily the arms of your country in tourney with your followers."

"And what leisure is there for this?" exclaimed the young Chief, starting as if something horrid had occurred to his imagination. "How many days are there betwixt this hour and Palm Sunday, and what is to chance then? A list enclosed, from which no man can stir, more than the poor bear who is chained to his stake. Sixty living men, the best and fiercest, (one alone excepted!) which Albyn can send down from her mountains, all athirst for each other's blood, while a King and his nobles, and shouting thousands besides, attend, as at a theatre, to encourage their demoniac fury! Blows clang, and blood flows, thicker, faster, redder—they rush on each other like madmen—they tear each other like wild beasts—the wounded are trodden to death amid the feet of their companions! Blood ebbs, arms become weak—but there must be no parley, no truce, no interruption, while any of the maimed wretches remain alive! Here is no crouching behind battlements, no fighting with missile weapons,—all is hand to hand, till hands can no longer be raised to maintain the ghastly conflict! If such a field is so horrible in idea, what think you it will be in reality?"

The Glover remained silent.

"I say again, what think you?"

"I can only pity you, Conachar," said Simon. "It is hard to be the descendant of a lofty line—the son of a noble father—the leader by birth of a gallant array—and yet to want, or think you want (for still I trust the fault lies much in a quick fancy, that over-estimates danger), to want that dogged quality, which is possessed by every game-cock that is worth a handful of corn, every hound that is worth a mess of offal. But how chanced it, that with such a consciousness of inability to fight in this battle, you proffered even now to share your chiefdom with my daughter? Your power must depend on your fighting this combat, and in that Catharine cannot help you."

"You mistake, old man," replied Eachin; "were Catharine to look kindly on the earnest love I bear her, it would carry me against the front of the enemies with the mettle of a war-horse. Overwhelming as my sense of weakness is, the feeling that Catharine looked on would give me strength. Say yet—oh, say yet—she shall be mine

if we gain the combat, and not the *Gow Chrom* himself, whose heart is of a piece with his anvil, ever went to battle so light as I shall do! One strong passion is conquered by another."

"This is folly, Conachar. Cannot the recollections of your interest, your honour, your kindred, do as much to stir your courage, as the thoughts of a brent-browed lass? Fie upon you, man!"

"You tell me but what I have told myself—but it is in vain," replied Eachin, with a sigh. "It is only whilst the timid stag is paired with the doe, that he is desperate and dangerous. Be it from constitution—be it, as our Highland cailliachs will say, from the milk of the White Doe—be it from my peaceful education, and the experience of your strict restraint—be it, as you think, from an overheated fancy, which paints danger yet more dangerous and ghastly than it is in reality, I cannot tell. But I know my failing, and—yes, it must be said!—so sorely dread that I cannot conquer it, that, could I have your consent to my wishes on such terms, I would even here make a pause, renounce the rank I have assumed, and retire into humble life."

"What, turn glover at last, Conachar?" said Simon; "this beats the legend of St. Crispin. Nay, nay, your hand was not framed for that; you shall spoil me no more doe-skins."

"Jest not," said Eachin, "I am serious. If I cannot labour, I will bring wealth enough to live without it. They will proclaim me recreant with horn and war-pipe. Let them do so—Catharine will love me the better that I have preferred the paths of peace to those of bloodshed, and Father Clement shall teach us to pity and forgive the world, which will load us with reproaches that wound not. I shall be the happiest of men—Catharine will enjoy all that unbounded affection can confer upon her, and will be freed from apprehension of the sights and sounds of horror, which your ill-assorted match would have prepared for her; and you, Father Glover, shall occupy your chimney-corner, the happiest and most honoured man, that ever—— "

"Hold, Eachin—I prithee, hold," said the Glover; "the fir light, with which this discourse must terminate, burns very low, and I would speak a word in my turn, and plain dealing is best. Though it may vex, or perhaps enrage you, let me end these visions by saying at once—Catharine can never be yours. A glove is the emblem of faith, and a man of my craft should therefore less than any other break his own. Catharine's hand is promised—promised to a man whom you may hate, but whom you must honour—to Henry the Armourer. The match is fitting by degree, agreeable to their mutual wishes, and I have given my promise. It is best to be plain at once—resent my refusal as you will—I am wholly in your power—But nothing shall make me break my word."

The Glover spoke thus decidedly, because he was aware from experience that the very irritable disposition of his former apprentice yielded in most cases to stern and decided resolution. Yet recollecting

where he was, it was with some feelings of fear that he saw the dying flame leap up, and spread a flash of light on the visage of Eachin, which seemed pale as the grave, while his eye rolled like that of a maniac in his fever fit. The light instantly sunk down and died, and Simon felt a momentary terror, lest he should have to dispute for his life with the

Conachar.

youth, whom he knew to be capable of violent actions when highly excited, however short a period his nature could support the measures which his passion commenced. He was relieved by the voice of Eachin, who muttered in a hoarse and altered tone,—

"Let what we have spoken this night rest in silence for ever—If thou bring'st it to light, thou wert better dig thine own grave."

Thus speaking, the door of the hut opened, admitting a gleam of moonshine. The form of the retiring Chief crossed it for an instant, the hurdle was then closed, and the shieling left in darkness.

Simon Glover felt relieved, when a conversation, fraught with offence and danger, was thus peaceably terminated. But he remained deeply affected by the condition of Hector MacIan, whom he had himself bred up.

"The poor child," said he, "to be called up to a place of eminence, only to be hurled from it with contempt! What he told me I partly knew, having often remarked that Conachar was more prone to quarrel than to fight. But this overpowering faint-heartedness, which neither shame nor necessity can overcome, I, though no Sir William Wallace, cannot conceive. And to propose himself for a husband to my daughter, as if a bride were to find courage for herself and the bridegroom! No, no—Catharine must wed a man to whom she may say,—'Husband, spare your enemy'—not one in whose behalf she must cry, 'Generous enemy, spare my husband.'"

Tired out with these reflections, the old man at length fell asleep. In the morning, he was awakened by his friend the Booshalloch, who, with something of a blank visage, proposed to him to return to his abode on the meadow at the Ballough. He apologised that the Chief could not see Simon Glover that morning, being busied with things about the expected combat; and that Eachin MacIan thought the residence at the Ballough would be safest for Simon Glover's health, and had given charge that every care should be taken for his protection and accommodation.

Niel Booshalloch dilated on these circumstances, to gloss over the neglect implied in the Chief's dismissing his visitor without a particular audience.

"His father knew better," said the herdsman. "But where should he have learned manners, poor thing, and bred up among your Perth burghers, who, excepting yourself, neighbour Glover, who speak Gaelic as well as I do, are a race incapable of civility?"

Simon Glover, it may be well believed, felt none of the want of respect which his friend resented on his account. On the contrary, he greatly preferred the quiet residence of the good herdsman, to the tumultuous hospitality of the daily festival of the Chief, even if there had not just passed an interview with Eachin upon a subject which it would be most painful to revive.

To the Ballough, therefore, he quietly retreated, where, could he have been secure of Catharine's safety, his leisure was spent pleasantly enough. His amusement was sailing on the lake, in a little skiff, which a Highland boy managed, while the old man angled. He frequently landed on the little island, where he mused over the tomb of his old friend Gilchrist MacIan, and made friends with the monks, presenting the prior with gloves of marten's fur, and the superior

officers with each of them a pair made from the skin of the wild-cat. The cutting and stitching of these little presents, served to beguile the time after sunset, while the family of the herdsman crowded around, admiring his address, and listening to the tales and songs with which the old man had skill to pass away a heavy evening.

It must be confessed that the cautious Glover avoided the

"'I must not kill the likeness of my foster-mother'" (p. 366).

conversation of Father Clement, whom he erroneously considered as rather the author of his misfortunes, than the guiltless sharer of them. "I will not," he thought, "to please his fancies, lose the good-will of these kind monks, which may be one day useful to me. I have suffered enough by his preachments already, I trow. Little the wiser and much the poorer have they made me. No, no, Catharine and Clement may think as they will; but I will take the first opportunity to sneak back like a rated hound at the call of his master, submit to a plentiful

course of hair-cloth and whipcord, disburse a lusty mulct, and become whole with the church again."

More than a fortnight had passed since the Glover had arrived at Ballough, and he began to wonder that he had not heard news of Catharine or of Henry Wynd, to whom he concluded the Provost had communicated the plan and place of his retreat. He knew the stout Smith dared not come up into the Clan Quhele country, on account of various feuds with the inhabitants, and with Eachin himself, while bearing the name of Conachar; but yet the Glover thought Henry might have found means to send him a message, or a token, by some one of the various couriers who passed and repassed between the court and the head-quarters of the Clan Quhele, in order to concert the terms of the impending combat, the march of the parties to Perth, and other particulars requiring previous adjustment. It was now the middle of March, and the fatal Palm Sunday was fast approaching.

Whilst time was thus creeping on, the exiled Glover had not even once set eyes upon his former apprentice. The care that was taken to attend to his wants and convenience in every respect, showed that he was not forgotten; but yet when he heard the Chieftain's horn ringing through the woods, he usually made it a point to choose his walk in a different direction. One morning, however, he found himself unexpectedly in Eachin's close neighbourhood, with scarce leisure to avoid him; and thus it happened.

As Simon strolled pensively through a little silvan glade, surrounded on either side with tall forest trees, mixed with underwood, a white doe broke from the thicket, closely pursued by two deer greyhounds, one of which griped her haunch, the other her throat, and pulled her down within half a furlong of the Glover, who was something startled at the suddenness of the incident. The near and piercing blast of a horn, and the baying of a slowhound, made Simon aware that the hunters were close behind, and on the trace of the deer. Hallooing and the sound of men running through the copse, were heard close at hand. A moment's recollection would have satisfied Simon, that his best way was to stand fast, or retire slowly, and leave it to Eachin to acknowledge his presence or not, as he should see cause. But his desire of shunning the young man had grown into a kind of instinct, and in the alarm of finding him so near, Simon hid himself in a bush of hazels mixed with holly, which altogether concealed him. He had hardly done so, ere Eachin, rosy with exercise, dashed from the thicket into the open glade, accompanied by his foster-father, Torquil of the Oak. The latter, with equal strength and address, turned the struggling hind on her back, and holding her fore feet in his right hand, while he knelt on her body, offered his skene with the left to the young Chief, that he might cut the animal's throat.

"It may not be, Torquil; do thine office, and take the assay thyself. I must not kill the likeness of my foster-mother."

This was spoken with a melancholy smile, while a tear at the same time stood in the speaker's eye. Torquil stared at his young Chief for an instant, then drew his sharp wood-knife across the creature's throat, with a cut so swift and steady, that the weapon reached the back-bone. Then rising on his feet, and again fixing a long piercing look on his chief, he said,—"As much as I have done to that hind, would I do to any living man whose ears could have heard my dault (foster-son) so much as name a white doe, and couple the word with Hector's name!"

If Simon had no reason before to keep himself concealed, this speech of Torquil furnished him with a pressing one.

"It cannot be concealed, father Torquil," said Eachin; "it will all out to the broad day."

"What will out? What will to broad day?" asked Torquil in surprise.

"It is the fatal secret," thought Simon; "and now, if this huge privy counsellor cannot keep silence, I shall be made answerable, I suppose, for Eachin's disgrace having been blown abroad."

Thinking thus anxiously, he availed himself, at the same time, of his position to see as much as he could of what passed between the afflicted Chieftain and his confidant, impelled by that spirit of curiosity which prompts us in the most momentous as well as the most trivial occasions of life, and which is sometimes found to exist in company with great personal fear.

As Torquil listened to what Eachin communicated, the young man sank into his arms, and, supporting himself on his shoulder, concluded his confession by a whisper into his ear. Torquil seemed to listen with such amazement as to make him incapable of crediting his ears. As if to be certain that it was Eachin who spoke, he gradually roused the youth from his reclining posture, and holding him up in some measure by a grasp on his shoulder, fixed on him an eye that seemed enlarged, and at the same time turned to stone, by the marvels he listened to. And so wild waxed the old man's visage after he had heard the murmured communication, that Simon Glover apprehended he would cast the youth from him as a dishonoured thing, in which case he might have lighted among the very copse in which he lay concealed, and occasioned his discovery in a manner equally painful and dangerous. But the passions of Torquil, who entertained for his foster-child even a double portion of that passionate fondness which always attends that connection in the Highlands, took a different turn.

"I believe it not!"—he exclaimed; "it is false of thy father's child;—false of thy mother's son;—falsest of MY *dault!* I offer my gage to heaven and hell, and will maintain the combat with him that shall call it true! Thou hast been spell-bound by an evil eye, my darling, and the fainting which you call cowardice is the work of magic. I remember the bat that struck the torch out on the hour that thou wert born,—that hour of grief and of joy. Cheer up, my beloved!

Thou shalt with me to Iona, and the good St. Columbus, with the whole choir of blessed saints and angels, who ever favoured thy race, shall take from thee the heart of the white doe, and return that which they have stolen from thee."

Eachin listened, with a look as if he would fain have believed the words of the comforter.

"But, Torquil," he said, "supposing this might avail us, the fatal day approaches, and if I go to the list, I dread me we shall be shamed."

"It cannot be—it shall not!" said Torquil,—"Hell shall not prevail so far—we will steep thy sword in holy water,—place vervain, St. John's-wort, and rowan-tree in thy crest. We will surround thee, I and thy eight brethren—thou shalt be safe as in a castle."

Again the youth helplessly muttered something, which, from the dejected tone in which it was spoken, Simon could not understand, while Torquil's deep tones in reply fell full and distinct upon his ear.

"Yes, there may be a chance of withdrawing thee from the conflict. Thou art the youngest who is to draw blade. Now, hear me, and thou shalt know what it is to have a foster-father's love, and how far it exceeds the love even of kinsmen. The youngest on the indenture of the Clan Chattan is Ferquhard Day. His father slew mine, and the red blood is seething hot between us—I looked to Palm Sunday as the term that should cool it—But mark! Thou wouldst have thought that the blood in the veins of this Ferquhard Day and in mine would not have mingled, had they been put into the same vessel, yet hath he cast the eyes of his love upon my only daughter Eva—the fairest of our maidens. Think with what feelings I heard the news. It was as if a wolf from the skirts of Ferragon had said, 'Give me thy child in wedlock, Torquil.' My child thought not thus, she loves Ferquhard, and weeps away her colour and strength in dread of the approaching battle. Let her give him but a sign of favour, and well I know he will forget kith and kin, forsake the field, and fly with her to the desert."

"He, the youngest of the champions of Clan Chattan being absent, I, the youngest of the Clan Quhele, may be excused from combat," said Eachin, blushing at the mean chance of safety thus opened to him.

"See now, my Chief," said Torquil, "and judge my thoughts towards thee—others might give thee their own lives and that of their sons—I sacrifice to thee the honour of my house."

"My friend, my father," repeated the Chief, folding Torquil to his bosom, "what a base wretch am I that have a spirit dastardly enough to avail myself of your sacrifice!"

"Speak not of that—Green woods have ears. Let us back to the camp, and send our gillies for the venison. Back, dogs, and follow at heel."

The slowhound, or lyme-dog, luckily for Simon, had drenched his nose in the blood of the deer, else he might have found the Glover's

lair in the thicket; but its more acute properties of scent being lost, it followed tranquilly with the gazehounds.

When the hunters were out of sight and hearing, the Glover arose, greatly relieved by their departure, and began to move off, in the opposite direction, as fast as his age permitted. His first reflection was on the fidelity of the foster-father.

"The wild mountain heart is faithful and true. Yonder man is more like the giants in romaunts, than a man of mould like ourselves; and yet Christians might take an example from him for his lealty. A simple contrivance this though, to finger a man from off their enemies' chequer, as if there would not be twenty of the wild-cats ready to supply his place."

Thus thought the Glover, not aware that the strictest proclamations were issued, prohibiting any of the two contending clans, their friends, allies, and dependents, from coming within fifty miles of Perth, during a week before and a week after the combat, which regulation was to be enforced by armed men.

So soon as our friend Simon arrived at the habitation of the herdsman, he found other news awaiting him. They were brought by Father Clement, who came in a pilgrim's cloak, or dalmatic, ready to commence his return to the southward, and desirous to take leave of his companion in exile, or to accept him as a travelling companion.

"But what," said the citizen, "has so suddenly induced you to return within the reach of danger?"

"Have you not heard," said Father Clement, "that March and his English allies having retired into England before the Earl of Douglas, the good Earl has applied himself to redress the evils of the commonwealth, and hath written to the court letters, desiring that the warrant for the High Court of Commission against heresy be withdrawn, as a trouble to men's consciences—that the nomination of Henry of Wardlaw to be Prelate of St. Andrews, be referred to the Parliament, with sundry other things pleasing to the Commons? Now, most of the nobles that are with the King at Perth, and with them Sir Patrick Charteris, your worthy Provost, have declared for the proposals of the Douglas. The Duke of Albany hath agreed to them; whether from good-will or policy I know not. The good King is easily persuaded to mild and gentle courses. And thus are the jaw-teeth of the oppressors dashed to pieces in their sockets, and the prey snatched from their ravening talons. Will you with me to the Lowlands, or do you abide here a little space?"

Niel Booshalloch saved his friend the trouble of reply.

"He had the Chief's authority," he said, "for saying that Simon Glover should abide until the champions went down to the battle." In this answer the citizen saw something not quite consistent with his own perfect freedom of volition; but he cared little for it at the time, as it furnished a good apology for not travelling along with the clergyman.

"An exemplary man," he said to his friend Niel Booshalloch, as soon as Father Clement had taken leave, "a great scholar, and a great saint. It is a pity almost he is no longer in danger to be burned, as his sermon at the stake would convert thousands. O, Niel Booshalloch! Father Clement's pile would be a sweet savouring sacrifice, and a beacon to all devout Christians. But what would the burning of a borrell ignorant burgess like me serve? Men offer not up old glove leather for incense, nor are beacons fed with undressed hides, I trow? Sooth to speak, I have too little learning and too much fear to get credit by the affair, and, therefore, I should, in our homely phrase, have both the scathe and the scorn."

"True for you," answered the herdsman.

CHAPTER XXX.

WE must return to the characters of our dramatic narrative, whom we left at Perth, when we accompanied the Glover and his fair daughter to Kinfauns, and from that hospitable mansion traced the course of Simon to Loch Tay; and the Prince, as the highest personage, claims our immediate attention.

This rash and inconsiderate young man endured with some impatience his sequestered residence with the Lord High Constable, with whose company, otherwise in every respect satisfactory, he became dissatisfied, from no other reason than that he held in some degree the character of his warder. Incensed against his uncle, and displeased with his father, he longed, not unnaturally, for the society of Sir John Ramorny, on whom he had been so long accustomed to throw himself for amusement, and though he would have resented the imputation as an insult, for guidance and direction. He, therefore, sent him a summons to attend him, providing his health permitted; and directed him to come by water to a little pavilion in the High Constable's garden, which, like that of Sir John's own lodgings, ran down to the Tay. In renewing an intimacy so dangerous, Rothsay only remembered that he had been Sir John Ramorny's munificent friend; while Sir John, on receiving the invitation, only recollected, on his part, the capricious insults he had sustained from his patron, the loss of his hand, and the lightness with which he had treated the subject, and the readiness with which Rothsay had abandoned his cause in the matter of the Bonnet-maker's slaughter. He laughed bitterly when he read the Prince's billet.

"Eviot," he said, "man a stout boat with six trusty men,—trusty

men, mark me—lose not a moment; and bid Dwining instantly come hither. Heaven smiles on us, my trusty friend," he said to the mediciner. "I was but beating my brains how to get access to this fickle boy, and here he sends to invite me."

"Hem!—I see the matter very clearly," said Dwining. "Heaven smiles on some untoward consequences—he! he! he!"

"No matter, the trap is ready; and it is baited, too, my friend, with what would lure the boy from a sanctuary, though a troop with drawn weapons waited him in the churchyard. Yet is it scarce necessary. His own weariness of himself would have done the job. Get thy matters ready—thou goest with us. Write to him, as I cannot, that we come instantly to attend his commands, and do it clerkly. He reads well, and that he owes to me."

"He will be your valiancy's debtor for more knowledge before he dies—he! he! he! But is your bargain sure with the Duke of Albany?"

"Enough to gratify my ambition, thy avarice, and the revenge of both. Aboard, aboard, and speedily; let Eviot throw in a few flasks of the choicest wine, and some cold baked meats."

"But your arm, my lord, Sir John? Does it not pain you?"

"The throbbing of my heart silences the pain of my wound. It beats as it would burst my bosom."

"Heaven forbid!" said Dwining; adding, in a low voice, "It would be a strange sight if it should. I should like to dissect it, save that its stony case would spoil my best instruments."

In a few minutes they were in the boat, while a speedy messenger carried the note to the Prince.

Rothsay was seated with the Constable, after their noontide repast. He was sullen and silent; and the Earl had just asked whether it was his pleasure that the table should be cleared, when a note, delivered to the Prince, changed at once his aspect.

"As you will," he said. "I go to the pavilion in the garden,—always with permission of my Lord Constable,—to receive my late Master of the Horse."

"My lord?" said Lord Errol.

"Ay, my lord; must I ask permission twice?"

"No, surely, my lord," answered the Constable; "but has your Royal Highness recollected that Sir John Ramorny——"

"Has not the plague, I hope?" replied the Duke of Rothsay. "Come, Errol, you would play the surly turnkey; but it is not in your nature,—farewell for half an hour."

"A new folly!" said Errol, as the Prince, flinging open a lattice of the ground-parlour in which they sat, stept out into the garden. "A new folly, to call back that villain to his councils. But he is infatuated."

The Prince, in the meantime, looked back, and said hastily,—

"Your lordship's good housekeeping will afford us a flask or two of wine, and a slight collation in the pavilion? I love the al fresco of the river."

The Constable bowed, and gave the necessary orders; so that Sir John found the materials of good cheer ready displayed, when, landing from his barge, he entered the pavilion.

"It grieves my heart to see your Highness under restraint," said Ramorny, with a well-executed appearance of sympathy.

"That grief of thine will grieve mine," said the Prince. "I am sure here has Errol, and a right true-hearted lord he is, so tired me with grave looks, and something like grave lessons, that he has driven me back to thee, thou reprobate, from whom, as I expect nothing good, I may perhaps obtain something entertaining. Yet ere we say more, it was foul work, that upon the Fastern's Even, Ramorny. I well hope thou gavest not aim to it."

"On my honour, my lord, a simple mistake of the brute Bonthron. I did but hint to him that a dry beating would be due to the fellow by whom I had lost a hand; and lo you, my knave makes a double mistake. He takes one man for another, and instead of the baton he uses the axe."

"It is well that it went no farther. Small matter for the Bonnet-maker; but I had never forgiven you had the Armourer fallen—there is not his match in Britain. But I hope they hanged the villain high enough?"

"If thirty feet might serve," replied Ramorny.

"Pah! no more of him," said Rothsay; "his wretched name makes the good wine taste of blood. And what are the news in Perth, Ramorny? How stands it with the bona robas and the galliards?"

"Little galliardise stirring, my lord," answered the Knight. "All eyes are turned to the motions of the Black Douglas, who comes with five thousand chosen men to put us all to rights, as if he were bound for another Otterburn. It is said he is to be Lieutenant again. It is certain many have declared for his faction."

"It is time, then, my feet were free," said Rothsay, "otherwise I may find a worse warder than Errol."

"Ah, my lord! were you once away from this place, you might make as bold a head as Douglas."

"Ramorny," said the Prince, gravely, "I have but a confused remembrance of your once having proposed something horrible to me. Beware of such counsel. I would be free—I would have my person at my own disposal; but I will never levy arms against my father, nor those it pleases him to trust."

"It was only for your Royal Highness's personal freedom that I was presuming to speak," answered Ramorny. "Were I in your Grace's place, I would get me into that good boat which hovers on the Tay, and drop quietly down to Fife, where you have many friends, and make

free to take possession of Falkland. It is a royal castle; and though the King has bestowed it in gift on your uncle, yet surely even if the grant were not subject to challenge, your Grace might make free with the residence of so near a relative."

"He hath made free with mine," said the Duke, "as the Stewartry of Renfrew can tell. But stay, Ramorny—hold—Did I not hear Errol say that the Lady Marjory Douglas, whom they call Duchess of Rothsay, is at Falkland? I would neither dwell with that lady, nor insult her by dislodging her."

"The lady was there, my lord," replied Ramorny; "but I have sure advice that she is gone to meet her father."

"Ha! to animate the Douglas against me? Or perhaps to beg him to spare me, providing I come on my knees to her bed, as pilgrims say the Emirs and Amirals, upon whom a Saracen Soldan bestows a daughter in marriage, are bound to do? Ramorny, I will act by the Douglas's own saying, 'It is better to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak.'* I will keep both foot and hand from fetters."

"No place fitter than Falkland," replied Ramorny. "I have enough of good yeomen to keep the place; and should your Highness wish to leave it, a brief ride reaches the sea in three directions."

"You speak well. But we shall die of gloom yonder. Neither mirth, music, nor maidens—Ha!" said the heedless Prince.

"Pardon me, noble Duke; but though the Lady Marjory Douglas be departed, like an errant dame in romance, to implore succour of her doughty sire, there is, I may say, a lovelier, I am sure a younger maiden, either presently at Falkland, or who will soon be on the road thither. Your Highness has not forgotten the Fair Maid of Perth?"

"Forget the prettiest wench in Scotland! No—any more than thou hast forgotten the hand that thou hadst in the Curfew Street onslaught on St. Valentine's Eve."

"The hand that I *had?* Your Highness would say, the hand that I lost. As certain as I shall never regain it, Catharine Glover is, or will soon be, at Falkland. I will not flatter your Highness by saying she expects to meet you—in truth, she proposes to place herself under the protection of the Lady Marjory."

"The little traitress," said the Prince—"she too to turn against me? She deserves punishment, Ramorny."

"I trust your Grace will make her penance a gentle one," replied the knight.

"Faith, I would have been her Father Confessor long ago, but I have ever found her coy."

"Opportunity was lacking, my lord," replied Ramorny; "and time presses even now."

"Nay, I am but too apt for a frolic; but my father——"

* Implying, that it was better to keep the forest than shut themselves up in fortified places.

"He is personally safe," said Ramorny, "and as much at freedom as ever he can be; while your Highness——"

"Must brook fetters, conjugal or literal—I know it. Yonder comes Douglas, with his daughter in his hand, as haughty, and as harsh-featured as himself, bating touches of age."

"And at Falkland sits in solitude the fairest wench in Scotland," said Ramorny. "Here is penance and restraint, yonder is joy and freedom."

"Thou hast prevailed, most sage counsellor," replied Rothsay; "but mark you, it shall be the last of my frolics."

Henbane Dwining writes a letter for the Prince.

"I trust so," replied Ramorny; "for, when at liberty, you may make a good accommodation with your royal father."

"I will write to him, Ramorny—Get the writing-materials—No, I cannot put my thoughts in words—do thou write."

"Your Royal Highness forgets," said Ramorny, pointing to his mutilated arm.

"Ah! that cursed hand of yours. What can we do?"

"So please your Highness," answered his counsellor, "if you would use the hand of the mediciner, Dwining—He writes like a clerk."

"Hath he a hint of the circumstances? Is he possessed of them?"

"Fully," said Ramorny; and stepping to the window, he called Dwining from the boat.

He entered the presence of the Prince of Scotland, creeping as if he trode upon eggs, with downcast eyes, and a frame that seemed shrunk up by a sense of awe produced by the occasion.

"There, fellow, are writing-materials. I will make trial of you—thou know'st the case—place my conduct to my father in a fair light."

Dwining sat down, and in a few minutes wrote a letter, which he handed to Sir John Ramorny.

"Why, the devil has aided thee, Dwining," said the knight. "Listen, my dear lord. 'Respected father and liege Sovereign,—Know that important considerations induce me to take my departure from this your court, purposing to make my abode at Falkland, both as the seat of my dearest uncle Albany, with whom I know your Majesty would desire me to use all familiarity, and as the residence of one from whom I have been too long estranged, and with whom I haste to exchange vows of the closest affection from henceforward."

The Duke of Rothsay and Ramorny laughed aloud; and the physician, who had listened to his own scroll as if it were a sentence of death, encouraged by their applause, raised his eyes, uttered faintly his chuckling note of He! he! and was again grave and silent, as if afraid he had transgressed the bounds of reverent respect.

"Admirable!" said the Prince—"Admirable! The old man will apply all this to the Duchess, as they call her, of Rothsay. Dwining, thou shouldst be *a secretis* to his Holiness the Pope, who sometimes, it is said, wants a scribe that can make one word record two meanings. I will subscribe it, and have the praise of the device."

"And now, my lord," said Ramorny, sealing the letter, and leaving it behind, "will you not to boat?"

"Not till my chamberlain attends, with some clothes and necessaries—and you may call my sewer also."

"My lord," said Ramorny, "time presses, and preparation will but excite suspicion. Your officers will follow with the mails to-morrow. For to-night, I trust my poor service may suffice to wait on you at table and chamber."

"Nay, this time it is thou who forgets," said the Prince, touching the wounded arm with his walking-rod. "Recollect, man, thou canst neither carve a capon, nor tie a point—a goodly sewer, or valet of the mouth!"

Ramorny grinned with rage and pain; for his wound, though in a way of healing, was still highly sensitive, and even the pointing a finger towards it made him tremble.

"Will your Highness now be pleased to take boat?"

"Not till I take leave of the Lord Constable. Rothsay must not slip away, like a thief from a prison, from the house of Errol. Summon him hither."

"My Lord Duke," said Ramorny, "it may be dangerous to our plan."

"To the devil with danger, thy plan, and thyself! I must and will act to Errol as becomes us both."

The Earl entered, agreeable to the Prince's summons.

"I gave you this trouble, my lord," said Rothsay, with the dignified courtesy which he knew so well how to assume, "to thank you for your hospitality and your good company. I can enjoy them no longer, as pressing affairs call me to Falkland."

"My lord," said the Lord High Constable, "I trust your Grace remembers that you are under ward."

"How!—under ward? If I am a prisoner, speak plainly—if not, I will take my freedom to depart."

"I would, my lord, your Highness would request his Majesty's permission for this journey. There will be much displeasure."

"Mean you displeasure against yourself, my lord, or against me?"

"I have already said your Highness lies in ward here; but if you determine to break it, I have no warrant—God forbid—to put force on your inclinations. I can but entreat your Highness, for your own sake——"

"Of my own interests I am the best judge—Good evening to you, my lord."

The wilful Prince stepped into the boat with Dwining and Ramorny, and, waiting for no other attendance, Eviot pushed off the vessel, which descended the Tay rapidly by the assistance of sail and oar, and of the ebb-tide.

For some space the Duke of Rothsay appeared silent and moody, nor did his companions interrupt his reflections. He raised his head at length, and said, "My father loves a jest, and when all is over, he will take this frolic at no more serious rate than it deserves—a fit of youth, with which he will deal as he has with others. Yonder, my masters, shows the old Hold of Kinfauns, frowning above the Tay. Now, tell me, John Ramorny, how thou hast dealt to get the Fair Maid of Perth out of the hands of yonder bull-headed Provost; for Errol told me it was rumoured that she was under his protection."

"Truly she was, my lord, with the purpose of being transferred to the patronage of the Duchess,—I mean of the Lady Marjory of Douglas. Now, this beetle-headed Provost, who is after all but a piece of blundering valiancy, has, like most such, a retainer of some slyness and cunning, whom he uses in all his dealings, and whose suggestions he generally considers as his own ideas. Whenever I would possess myself of a landward baron, I address myself to such a confidant, who, in the present case, is called Kitt Henshaw, an old skipper upon the Tay, and who, having in his time sailed as far as Campvere, holds with Sir Patrick Charteris the respect due to one who has seen foreign countries. This his agent I have made my own, and by his means have insinuated

various apologies, in order to postpone the departure of Catharine for Falkland."

"But to what good purpose?"

"I know not if it is wise to tell your Highness, lest you should disapprove of my views—I meant the officers of the Commission for inquiry into heretical opinions should have found the Fair Maid at Kinfauns, for our beauty is a peevish, self-willed swerver from the Church; and certes, I designed that the Knight should have come in for his share of the fines and confiscations that were about to be inflicted. The monks were eager enough to be at him, seeing he hath had frequent disputes with them about the salmon-tithe."

"But wherefore wouldst thou have ruined the Knight's fortunes, and brought the beautiful young woman to the stake, perchance?"

"Pshaw, my Lord Duke! Monks never burn pretty maidens. An old woman might have been in some danger; and as for my Lord Provost, as they call him, if they had clipped off some of his fat acres, it would have been some atonement for the needless brave he put on me in St. John's Church."

"Methinks, John, it was but a base revenge," said Rothsay.

"Rest ye contented, my lord. He that cannot right himself by the hand must use his head. Well, that chance was over by the tender-hearted Douglas's declaring in favour of tender conscience; and then, my lord, old Henshaw found no further objections to carrying the Fair Maid of Perth to Falkland,—not to share the dulness of the Lady Marjory's society, as Sir Patrick Charteris and she herself doth opine, but to keep your Highness from tiring when we return from hunting in the park."

There was again a long pause, in which the Prince seemed to muse deeply. At length he spoke. "Ramorny, I have a scruple in this matter; but if I name it to thee, the devil of sophistry, with which thou art possessed, will argue it out of me, as it has done many others. This girl is the most beautiful, one excepted, whom I ever saw or knew; and I like her the more that she bears some features of—Elizabeth of Dunbar. But she, I mean Catharine Glover, is contracted, and presently to be wedded, to Henry the Armourer, a craftsman unequalled for skill, and a man-at-arms yet unmatched in the barrace. To follow out this intrigue would do a good fellow too much wrong."

"Your Highness will not expect me to be very solicitous of Henry Smith's interest," said Ramorny, looking at his wounded arm.

"By St. Andrew with his shored cross, this disaster of thine is too much harped upon, John Ramorny! Others are content with putting a finger into man's pie, but thou must thrust in thy whole gory hand. It is done, and cannot be undone—let it be forgotten."

"Nay, my lord, you allude to it more frequently than I," answered the Knight,—"in derision, it is true; while I—but I can be silent on the subject if I cannot forget it."

"Well, then, I tell thee that I have scruple about this intrigue. Dost thou remember, when we went in a frolic to hear Father Clement preach, or rather to see this fair heretic, that he spoke as touchingly as a minstrel about the rich man taking away the poor man's only ewe lamb?"

"A great matter, indeed," answered Sir John, "that this churl's

The Duke of Rothsay on his way to the Castle of Falkland.

wife's eldest son should be fathered by the Prince of Scotland! How many earls would covet the like fate for their fair countesses? And how many that have had such good luck sleep not a grain the worse for it?"

"And if I might presume to speak," said the mediciner, "the ancient laws of Scotland assigned such a privilege to every feudal

lord over his female vassals, though lack of spirit and love of money hath made many exchange it for gold."

"I require no argument to urge me to be kind to a pretty woman. But this Catharine has been ever cold to me," said the Prince.

"Nay, my lord," said Ramorny, "if, young, handsome, and a Prince, you know not how to make yourself acceptable to a fine woman, it is not for me to say more."

"And if it were not far too great audacity in me to speak again, I would say," quoth the leech, "that all Perth knows that the *Gow Chrom* never was the maiden's choice, but fairly forced upon her by her father. I know for certain that she refused him repeatedly."

"Nay, if thou canst assure us of that, the case is much altered," said Rothsay. "Vulcan was a smith as well as Harry Wynd; he would needs wed Venus, and our Chronicles tell us what came of it."

"Then long may Lady Venus live and be worshipped," said Sir John Ramorny; "and success to the gallant knight Mars, who goes a-wooing to her goddess-ship!"

The discourse took a gay and idle turn for a few minutes; but the Duke of Rothsay soon dropped it. "I have left," he said, "yonder air of the prison-house behind me, and yet my spirits scarce revive. I feel that drowsy, not unpleasing, yet melancholy mood, that comes over us when exhausted by exercise, or satiated with pleasure. Some music now, stealing on the ear, yet not loud enough to make us lift the eye, were a treat for the gods."

"Your Grace has but to speak your wishes, and the nymphs of the Tay are as favourable as the fair ones upon the shore. Hark—it is a lute."

"A lute!" said the Duke of Rothsay, listening; "it is, and rarely touched. I should remember that dying fall. Steer towards the boat from whence the music comes."

"It is old Henshaw," said Ramorny, "working up the stream. How, skipper!"

The boatmen answered the hail, and drew up alongside of the Prince's barge.

"Oh, ho! my old friend!" said the Prince, recognizing the figure as well as the appointments of the French glee-woman, Louise. "I think I owe thee something for being the means of thy having a fright, at least, upon St. Valentine's day. Into this boat with thee, lute, puppy dog, scrip and all—I will prefer thee to a lady's service, who shall feed thy very cur on capons and canary."

"I trust your Highness will consider——" said Ramorny.

"I will consider nothing but my pleasure, John. Pray, do thou be so complying as to consider it also."

"Is it indeed to a lady's service you would promote me?" said the glee-maiden. "And where does she dwell?"

"At Falkland," answered the Prince.

"Oh, I have heard of that great lady!" said Louise; "and will you indeed prefer me to your right royal consort's service?"

"I will, by my honour—whenever I receive her as such. Mark that reservation, John," said he aside to Ramorny.

The persons who were in the boat caught up the tidings, and concluding a reconciliation was about to take place betwixt the royal couple, exhorted Louise to profit by her good fortune, and add herself to the Duchess of Rothsay's train. Several offered her some acknowledgment for the exercise of her talents.

During this moment of delay, Ramorny whispered to Dwining, "Make in, knave, with some objection. This addition is one too many. Rouse thy wits, while I speak a word with Henshaw."

"If I might presume to speak," said Dwining, "as one who have made my studies both in Spain and Arabia, I would say, my lord, that the sickness has appeared in Edinburgh, and that there may be risk in admitting this young wanderer into your Highness's vicinity."

"Ah! and what is it to thee," said Rothsay, "whether I choose to be poisoned by the pestilence or the pothecary? Must thou, too, needs thwart my humour?"

While the Prince thus silenced the remonstrances of Dwining, Sir John Ramorny had snatched a moment to learn from Henshaw that the removal of the Duchess of Rothsay from Falkland was still kept profoundly secret, and that Catharine Glover would arrive there that evening or the next morning, in expectation of being taken under the noble lady's protection.

The Duke of Rothsay, deeply plunged in thought, received this intimation so coldly, that Ramorny took the liberty of remonstrating. "This, my lord," he said, "is playing the spoiled child of fortune. You wish for liberty—it comes. You wish for beauty—it awaits you, with just so much delay as to render the boon more precious. Even your slightest desires seem a law to the Fates; for you desire music when it seems most distant, and the lute and song are at your hand. These things, so sent, should be enjoyed, else we are but like petted children, who break and throw from them the toys they have wept themselves sick for."

"To enjoy pleasure, Ramorny," said the Prince, "a man should have suffered pain, as it requires fasting to gain a good appetite. We, who can have all for a wish, little enjoy that all when we have possessed it. Seest thou yonder thick cloud, which is about to burst to rain? It seems to stifle me—the waters look dark and lurid—the shores have lost their beautiful form——"

"My lord, forgive your servant," said Ramorny. "You indulge a powerful imagination, as an unskilful horseman permits a fiery steed to rear until he falls back on his master and crushes him. I pray you shake off this lethargy. Shall the glee-maiden make some music?"

"Let her—but it must be melancholy; all mirth would at this moment jar on my ear."

The maiden sung a melancholy dirge in Norman French; the words, of which the following is an imitation, were united to a tune as doleful as they are themselves.

I.

"Yes, thou mayst sigh,
And look once more at all around,
At stream and bank, and sky and ground.
Thy life its final course has found,
And thou must die.

II.

"Yes, lay thee down,
And while thy struggling pulses flutter,
Bid the grey monk his soul-mass mutter,
And the deep bell its death-tone utter—
Thy life is gone.

III.

"Be not afraid.
'Tis but a pang, and then a thrill,
A fever fit, and then a chill;
And then an end of human ill,
For thou art dead."

The Prince made no observation on the music; and the maiden, at Ramorny's beck, went on from time to time with her minstrel craft, until the evening sunk down into rain, first soft and gentle, at length in great quantities, and accompanied by a cold wind. There was neither cloak nor covering for the Prince, and he sullenly rejected that which Ramorny offered.

"It is not for Rothsay to wear your cast garments, Sir John—this melted snow, which I feel pierce me to the very marrow, I am now encountering by your fault. Why did you presume to put off the boat without my servants and apparel?"

Ramorny did not attempt an exculpation; for he knew the Prince was in one of those humours, when to enlarge upon a grievance was more pleasing to him than to have his mouth stopped by any reasonable apology. In sullen silence, or amid unsuppressed chiding, the boat arrived at the fishing village of Newburgh. The party landed, and found horses in readiness, which indeed Ramorny had long since provided for the occasion. Their quality underwent the Prince's bitter sarcasm, expressed to Ramorny sometimes by direct words, oftener by bitter gibes. At length they were mounted, and rode on through the closing night and the falling rain, the Prince leading the way with reckless haste. The glee-maiden, mounted by his express order, attended them; and well for her that, accustomed to severe weather and exercise both on foot and horseback, she supported as firmly as the men the

fatigues of the nocturnal ride. Ramorny was compelled to keep at the Prince's rein, being under no small anxiety lest, in his wayward fit, he might ride off from him entirely, and, taking refuge in the house of some loyal baron, escape the snare which was spread for him. He therefore suffered inexpressibly during the ride, both in mind and in body.

At length the forest of Falkland received them, and a glimpse of the moon showed the dark and huge tower, an appendage of royalty itself, though granted for a season to the Duke of Albany. On a signal given the drawbridge fell. Torches glared in the courtyard, menials attended, and the Prince, assisted from horseback, was ushered into an apartment, where Ramorny waited on him, together with Dwining, and entreated him to take the leech's advice. The Duke of Rothsay repulsed the proposal, haughtily ordered his bed to be prepared, and having stood for some time shivering in his dank garments beside a large blazing fire, he retired to his apartment without taking leave of any one.

"You see the peevish humour of this childish boy, now," said Ramorny to Dwining; "can you wonder that a servant, who has done so much for him as I have, should be tired of such a master?"

"No, truly," said Dwining, "that and the promised Earldom of Lindores would shake any man's fidelity. But shall we commence with him this evening? He has, if eye and cheek speak true, the foundation of a fever within him, which will make our work easy, while it will seem the effect of nature."

"It is an opportunity lost," said Ramorny; "but we must delay our blow till he has seen this beauty, Catharine Glover. She may be hereafter a witness that she saw him in good health, and master of his own motions, a brief space before—you understand me?"

Dwining nodded assent, and added,—

"There is no time lost; for there is little difficulty in blighting a flower, exhausted from having been made to bloom too soon."

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Ah me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee:
Few earthly things found favour in his sight,
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree."

BYRON.

WITH the next morning the humour of the Duke of Rothsay was changed. He complained, indeed, of pain and fever, but they rather seemed to stimulate than to overwhelm him. He was familiar with Ramorny, and though he said nothing on the subject of the preceding night, it was plain he remembered what he desired to obliterate from the memory of his followers—the ill-humour he had then displayed. He was civil to every one, and jested with Ramorny on the subject of Catharine's arrival.

"How surprised will the pretty prude be at seeing herself in a family of men, when she expects to be admitted amongst the hoods and pinners of Dame Marjory's waiting-women! Thou hast not many of the tender sex in thy household, I take it, Ramorny?"

"Faith, none except the minstrel wench, but a household drudge or two whom we may not dispense with. By the way, she is anxiously inquiring after the mistress your Highness promised to prefer her to. Shall I dismiss her, to hunt for her new mistress at leisure?"

"By no means, she will serve to amuse Catharine. And, hark you, were it not well to receive that coy jillet with something of a mumming?"

"How mean you, my lord?"

"Thou art dull, man. We will not disappoint her, since she expects to find the Duchess of Rothsay—I will be Duke and Duchess in my own person."

"Still I do not comprehend."

"No one so dull as a wit," said the Prince, "when he does not hit off the scent at once. My Duchess, as they call her, has been in as great a hurry to run away from Falkland, as I to come hither. We have both left our apparel behind. There is as much female trumpery in the wardrobe adjoining to my sleeping-room as would equip a whole carnival. Look you, I will play Dame Marjory, disposed on this day-bed here with a mourning veil and a wreath of willow, to show my forsaken plight; thou, John, wilt look starch and stiff enough for her Galwegian maid of honour, the Countess Hermigild; and Dwining shall present the old Hecate, her nurse,—only she hath more beard on her upper lip than Dwining on his whole face, and skull to boot. He should have the commodity of a beard to set her forth conformably. Get thy kitchen drudges, and what passable pages thou hast with thee, to make my women of the bedroom. Hearest thou?—about it instantly."

Ramorny hasted into the anteroom, and told Dwining the Prince's device.

"Do thou look to humour the fool," he said; "I care not how little I see him, knowing what is to be done."

"Trust all to me," said the physician, shrugging his shoulders. "What sort of a butcher is he that can cut the lamb's throat, yet is afraid to hear it bleat?"

"Tush, fear not my constancy—I cannot forget that he would have cast me into the cloister with as little regard as if he threw away the truncheon of a broken lance. Begone—yet stay—ere you go to arrange this silly pageant, something must be settled to impose on the thick-witted Charteris. He is like enough, should he be left in the belief that the Duchess of Rothsay is still here, and Catharine Glover in attendance on her, to come down with offers of service, and the like, when, as I need scarce tell thee, his presence would be inconvenient. Indeed, this is the more likely, that some folks have given a warmer name to the iron-headed Knight's great and tender patronage of this damsel."

"With that hint, let me alone to deal with him. I will send him such a letter, that for this month he shall hold himself as ready for a journey to hell as to Falkland. Can you tell me the name of the Duchess's confessor?"

"Waltheof, a grey friar."

"Enough—then here I start."

In a few minutes, for he was a clerk of rare celerity, Dwining finished a letter, which he placed into Ramorny's hands.

"This is admirable, and would have made thy fortune with Rothsay—I think I should have been too jealous to trust thee in his household, save that his day is closed."

"Read it aloud," said Dwining, "that we may judge if it goes

trippingly off." And Ramorny read as follows: "By command of our high and mighty Princess Marjory, Duchess of Rothsay, and so forth, we Waltheof, unworthy brother of the order of St. Francis, do thee, Sir Patrick Charteris, Knight, of Kinfauns, to know, that her Highness marvels much at the temerity with which you have sent to her presence a woman, of whose fame she can judge but lightly, seeing she hath made her abode, without any necessity, for more than a week in thine own castle, without company of any other female, saving menials; of which foul cohabitation the savour is gone up through Fife, Angus, and Perthshire. Nevertheless, her Highness, considering the case as one of human frailty, hath not caused this wanton one to be scourged with nettles, or otherwise to dree penance; but as two good brethren of the convent of Lindores, the Fathers Thickscull and Dundermore, have been summoned up to the Highlands upon an especial call, her Highness hath committed to their care this maiden Catharine, with charge to convey her to her father, whom she states to be residing beside Loch Tay, under whose protection she will find a situation more fitting her qualities and habits, than the Castle of Falkland, while her Highness the Duchess of Rothsay abides there. She hath charged the said reverend brothers so to deal with the young woman, as may give her a sense of the sin of incontinence, and she commendeth thee to confession and penitence. Signed, Waltheof, by command of an high and mighty Princess"—and so forth.

When he had finished, "Excellent—excellent!" Ramorny exclaimed. "This unexpected rebuff will drive Charteris mad! He hath been long making a sort of homage to this lady, and to find himself suspected of incontinence, when he was expecting the full credit of a charitable action, will altogether confound him; and, as thou say'st, it will be long enough ere he come hither to look after the damsel, or do honour to the dame. But away to thy pageant, while I prepare that which shall close the pageant for ever."

It was an hour before noon, when Catharine, escorted by old Henshaw and a groom of the Knight of Kinfauns, arrived before the lordly tower of Falkland. The broad banner which was displayed from it bore the arms of Rothsay, the servants who appeared wore the colours of the Prince's household, all confirming the general belief that the Duchess still resided there. Catharine's heart throbbed, for she had heard that the Duchess had the pride as well as the high courage of the House of Douglas, and felt uncertain touching the reception she was to experience. On entering the Castle, she observed that the train was smaller than she had expected, but as the Duchess lived in close retirement, she was little surprised at this. In a species of anteroom she was met by a little old woman, who seemed bent double with age, and supported herself upon an ebony staff.

"Truly thou art welcome, fair daughter," said she, saluting Catharine, "and, as I may say, to an afflicted house; and I trust" (once

more saluting her) "thou wilt be a consolation to my precious and right royal daughter the Duchess. Sit thee down, my child, till I see whether my lady be at leisure to receive thee. Ah, my child, thou art very lovely indeed, if Our Lady hath given to thee a soul to match with so fair a body."

With that the counterfeit old woman crept into the next apartment, where she found Rothsay in the masquerading habit he had prepared, and Ramorny, who had evaded taking part in the pageant, in his ordinary attire.

"Thou art a precious rascal, Sir Doctor," said the Prince; "by my honour I think thou couldst find in thy heart to play out the whole play thyself, lover's part and all."

"If it were to save your Highness trouble," said the leech, with his usual subdued laugh.

"No, no," said Rothsay, "I'll never need thy help, man—and tell me now, how look I, thus disposed on the couch—languishing and ladylike, ah?"

"Something too fine-complexioned and soft-featured for the Lady Marjory of Douglas, if I may presume to say so," said the leech.

"Away, villain, and marshal in this fair frostpiece—fear not she will complain of my effeminacy—and thou, Ramorny, away also."

As the Knight left the apartment by one door, the fictitious old woman ushered in Catharine Glover by another. The room had been carefully darkened to twilight, so that Catharine saw the apparently female figure stretched on the couch without the least suspicion.

"Is that the maiden?" asked Rothsay, in a voice naturally sweet, and now carefully modulated to a whispering tone—"Let her approach, Griselda, and kiss our hand."

The supposed nurse led the trembling maiden forward to the side of the couch, and signed to her to kneel. Catharine did so, and kissed with much devotion and simplicity the gloved hand which the counterfeit Duchess extended to her.

"Be not afraid," said the same musical voice; "in me you only see a melancholy example of the vanity of human greatness—happy those, my child, whose rank places them beneath the storms of state."

While he spoke, he put his arms around Catharine's neck and drew her towards him, as if to salute her in token of welcome. But the kiss was bestowed with an earnestness which so much overacted the part of the fair patroness, that Catharine, concluding the Duchess had lost her senses, screamed aloud.

"Peace, fool! it is I—David of Rothsay."

Catharine looked around her—the nurse was gone, and the Duke tearing off his veil, she saw herself in the power of a daring young libertine.

"Now be present with me, Heaven!" she said; "and thou wilt, if I forsake not myself."

As this resolution darted through her mind, she repressed her disposition to scream, and, as far as she might, strove to conceal her fear.

"The jest hath been played," she said, with as much firmness as she could assume; "may I entreat that your Highness will now unhand me," for he still kept hold of her arm.

"Nay, my pretty captive, struggle not—why should you fear?"

"I do not struggle, my lord. As you are pleased to detain me, I will not, by striving, provoke you to use me ill, and give pain to yourself, when you have time to think."

"Why, thou traitress, thou hast held me captive for months," said the Prince; "and wilt thou not let me hold thee for a moment?"

"This were gallantry, my lord, were it in the streets of Perth, where I might listen or escape as I listed—it is tyranny here."

"And if I did let thee go, whither wouldst thou fly?" said Rothsay. "The bridges are up—the portcullis down—and the men who follow me are strangely deaf to a peevish maiden's squalls. Be kind, therefore, and you shall know what it is to oblige a Prince."

"Unloose me, then, my lord, and hear me appeal from thyself to thyself—from Rothsay to the Prince of Scotland. I am the daughter of an humble but honest citizen. I am, I may wellnigh say, the spouse of a brave and honest man. If I have given your Highness any encouragement for what you have done, it has been unintentional. Thus forewarned, I entreat you to forego your power over me, and suffer me to depart. Your Highness can obtain nothing from me, save by means equally unworthy of knighthood or manhood."

"You are bold, Catharine," said the Prince, "but neither as a knight nor a man can I avoid accepting a defiance. I must teach you the risk of such challenges."

While he spoke, he attempted to throw his arms again around her; but she eluded his grasp, and proceeded in the same tone of firm decision.

"My strength, my lord, is as great to defend myself in an honourable strife, as yours can be to assail me with a most dishonourable purpose. Do not shame yourself and me by putting it to the combat. You may stun me with blows, or you may call aid to overpower me; but otherwise you will fail of your purpose."

"What a brute you would make me!" said the Prince. "The force I would use is no more than excuses women in yielding to their own weakness."

He sat down in some emotion.

"Then keep it," said Catharine, "for those women who desire such an excuse. My resistance is that of the most determined mind, which love of honour and fear of shame ever inspired. Alas! my lord, could you succeed, you would but break every bond between me and life—between yourself and honour. I have been trained fraudulently here,

Catharine Glover, with the Duke of Rothsay disguised as the Duchess.

by what decoys I know not; but were I to go dishonoured hence, it would be to denounce the destroyer of my happiness to every quarter of Europe. I would take the palmer's staff in my hand, and wherever chivalry is honoured, or the word Scotland has been heard, I would proclaim the heir of a hundred kings, the son of the godly Robert Stewart, the Heir of the heroic Bruce—a truthless, faithless man, unworthy of the crown he expects, and of the spurs he wears. Every lady in wide Europe would hold your name too foul for her lips—every worthy knight would hold you a baffled, forsworn caitiff, false to the first vow of arms, the protection of woman, and the defence of the feeble."

Rothsay resumed his seat, and looked at her with a countenance in which resentment was mingled with admiration. "You forget to whom you speak, maiden. Know, the distinction I have offered you is one for which hundreds, whose trains you are born to bear, would feel gratitude."

"Once more, my lord," resumed Catharine, "keep these favours for those by whom they are prized; or rather reserve your time and your health for other and nobler pursuits,—for the defence of your country and the happiness of your subjects. Alas, my lord! how willingly would an exulting people receive you for their chief! How gladly would they close around you, did you show desire to head them against the oppression of the mighty, the violence of the lawless, the seduction of the vicious, and the tyranny of the hypocrite!"

The Duke of Rothsay, whose virtuous feelings were as easily excited as they were evanescent, was affected by the enthusiasm with which she spoke. "Forgive me if I have alarmed you, maiden," he said; "thou art too noble-minded to be the toy of passing pleasure, for which my mistake destined thee; and I, even were thy birth worthy of thy noble spirit and transcendent beauty, have no heart to give thee; for by the homage of the heart only should such as thou be wooed. But my hopes have been blighted, Catharine—the only woman I ever loved has been torn from me in the very wantonness of policy, and a wife imposed on me whom I must ever detest, even had she the loveliness and softness which alone can render a woman amiable in my eyes. My health is fading even in early youth; and all that is left for me is to snatch such flowers as the short passage from life to the grave will now present. Look at my hectic cheek—feel, if you will, my intermitting pulse; and pity me, and excuse me, if I, whose rights as a Prince and as a man have been trampled upon and usurped, feel occasional indifference towards the rights of others, and indulge a selfish desire to gratify the wish of the passing moment."

"Oh, my lord!" exclaimed Catharine, with the enthusiasm which belonged to her character—"I will call you my dear lord,—for dear must the Heir of Bruce be to every child of Scotland,—let me not, I pray, hear you speak thus! Your glorious ancestor endured exile,

persecution, the night of famine, and the day of unequal combat, to free his country,—do you practise the like self-denial to free yourself. Tear yourself from those who find their own way to greatness smoothed by feeding your follies. Distrust yon dark Ramorny!—you know it not, I am sure—you could not know; but the wretch who could urge the daughter to courses of shame by threatening the life of the aged father, is capable of all that is vile—all that is treacherous!"

"Did Ramorny do this?" said the Prince.

"He did indeed, my lord, and he dares not deny it."

"It shall be looked to," answered the Duke of Rothsay. "I have ceased to love him; but he has suffered much for my sake, and I must see his services honourably requited."

"*His* services! Oh, my lord, if chronicles speak true, such services brought Troy to ruins, and gave the infidels possession of Spain."

"Hush, maiden; speak within compass, I pray you," said the Prince, rising up; "our conference ends here."

"Yet one word, my Lord Duke of Rothsay," said Catharine, with animation, while her beautiful countenance resembled that of an admonitory angel—"I cannot tell what impels me to speak thus boldly; but the fire burns within me, and will break out. Leave this castle without an hour's delay! The air is unwholesome for you. Dismiss this Ramorny before the day is ten minutes older! His company is most dangerous."

"What reason have you for saying this?"

"None in especial," answered Catharine, abashed at her own eagerness,—"none, perhaps, excepting my fears for your safety."

"To vague fears, the Heir of Bruce must not listen. What, ho! who waits without?"

Ramorny entered, and bowed low to the Duke and to the maiden, whom, perhaps, he considered as likely to be preferred to the post of favourite Sultana, and therefore entitled to a courteous obeisance.

"Ramorny," said the Prince, "is there in the household any female of reputation, who is fit to wait on this young woman, till we can send her where she may desire to go?"

"I fear," replied Ramorny, "if it displease not your Highness to hear the truth, your household is indifferently provided in that way; and that, to speak the very verity, the glee-maiden is the most decorous amongst us."

"Let her wait upon this young person, then, since better may not be. And take patience, maiden, for a few hours."

Catharine retired.

"So, my lord,—part you so soon from the Fair Maid of Perth? This is, indeed, the very wantonness of victory."

"There is neither victory nor defeat in the case," returned the Prince, dryly. "The girl loves me not; nor do I love her well enough to torment myself concerning her scruples."

"The chaste Malcolm the Maiden revived in one of his descendants!" said Ramorny.

"Favour me, sir, by a truce to your wit, or by choosing a different subject for its career. It is noon, I believe, and you will oblige me by commanding them to serve up dinner."

Ramorny left the room, but Rothsay thought he discovered a smile upon his countenance; and to be the subject of this man's satire, gave him no ordinary degree of pain. He summoned, however, the Knight to his table, and even admitted Dwining to the same honour. The conversation was of a lively and dissolute cast, a tone encouraged by the Prince, as if designing to counterbalance the gravity of his morals in the morning, which Ramorny, who was read in old chronicles, had the boldness to liken to the continence of Scipio.

The banquet, notwithstanding the Duke's indifferent health, was protracted in idle wantonness, far beyond the rules of temperance; and, whether owing simply to the strength of the wine which he drank, or the weakness of his constitution, or, as it is probable, because the last wine which he quaffed had been adulterated by Dwining, it so happened that the Prince, towards the end of the repast, fell into a lethargic sleep, from which it seemed impossible to rouse him. Sir John Ramorny and Dwining carried him to his chamber, accepting no other assistance than that of another person, whom we will afterwards give name to.

Next morning, it was announced that the Prince was taken ill of an infectious disorder; and to prevent its spreading through the household, no one was admitted to wait on him save his late Master of Horse, the physician Dwining, and the domestic already mentioned; one of whom seemed always to remain in the apartment, while the others observed a degree of precaution respecting their intercourse with the rest of the family, so strict as to maintain the belief that he was dangerously ill of an infectious disorder.

CHAPTER XXXII.

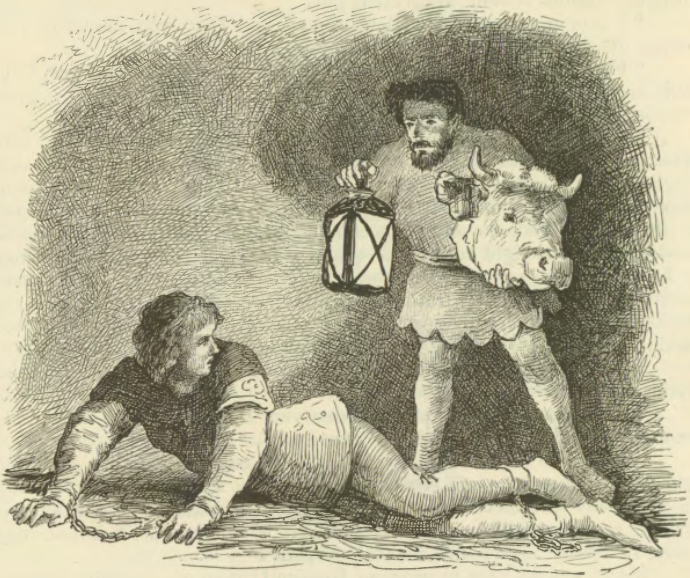
"In winter's tedious nights, sit by the fire,
With good old folks; and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful age, long ago betid:
And, ere thou bid good-night, to quit their grief,
Tell thou the lamentable fall of me."

King Richard II., Act 5, Scene 1.

FAR different had been the fate of the misguided Heir of Scotland, from that which was publicly given out in the town of Falkland. His ambitious uncle had determined on his death, as the means of removing the first and most formidable barrier betwixt his own family and the throne. James, the younger son of the King, was a mere boy, who might at more leisure be easily set aside. Ramorny's views of aggrandisement, and the resentment which he had latterly entertained against his master, made him a willing agent in young Rothsay's destruction. Dwining's love of gold, and his native malignity of disposition, rendered him equally forward. It had been resolved, with the most calculating cruelty, that all means which might leave behind marks of violence were to be carefully avoided, and the extinction of life suffered to take place of itself, by privation of every kind acting upon a frail and impaired constitution. The Prince of Scotland was not to be murdered, as Ramorny had expressed himself on another occasion,—he was only to cease to exist.

Rothsay's bedchamber in the Tower of Falkland was well adapted for the execution of such a horrible project. A small narrow staircase, scarce known to exist, opened from thence by a trap-door to the subterranean dungeons of the castle, through a passage by which the feudal lord was wont to visit, in private, and in disguise, the inhabitants

of those miserable regions. By this staircase the villains conveyed the insensible Prince to the lowest dungeon of the castle, so deep in the bowels of the earth, that no cries or groans, it was supposed, could possibly be heard, while the strength of its door and fastenings must for a long time have defied force, even if the entrance could have been discovered. Bonthron, who had been saved from the gallows for the purpose, was the willing agent of Ramorny's unparalleled cruelty to his misled and betrayed patron.



Bonthron visits the Prince in the dungeon.

This wretch revisited the dungeon at the time when the Prince's lethargy began to wear off, and when, awaking to sensation, he felt himself deadly cold, unable to move, and oppressed with fetters, which scarce permitted him to stir from the dank straw on which he was laid. His first idea was, that he was in a fearful dream—his next brought a confused augury of the truth. He called, shouted,—yelled at length in frenzy,—but no assistance came, and he was only answered by the vaulted roof of the dungeon. The agent of Hell heard these agonizing screams, and deliberately reckoned them against the taunts and

reproaches with which Rothsay had expressed his instinctive aversion to him. When, exhausted and hopeless, the unhappy youth remained silent, the savage resolved to present himself before the eyes of his prisoner. The locks were drawn, the chain fell; the Prince raised himself as high as his fetters permitted—a red glare, against which he was fain to shut his eyes, streamed through the vault; and when he opened them again, it was on the ghastly form of one whom he had reason to think dead. He sunk back in horror. "I am judged and condemned!" he exclaimed; "and the most abhorred fiend in the infernal regions is sent to torment me!"

"I live, my lord," said Bonthron; "and that you may live and enjoy life, be pleased to sit up and eat your victuals."

"Free me from these irons," said the Prince,—"release me from this dungeon,—and, dog as thou art, thou shalt be the richest man in Scotland."

"If you would give me the weight of your shackles in gold," said Bonthron, "I would rather see the iron on you than have the treasure myself! But look up—you were wont to love delicate fare—behold how I have catered for you." The wretch, with fiendish glee, unfolded a piece of raw hide covering the bundle which he bore under his arm, and, passing the light to and fro before it, showed the unhappy Prince a bull's head recently hewn from the trunk, and known in Scotland as the certain signal of death. He placed it at the foot of the bed, or rather lair on which the Prince lay. "Be moderate in your food," he said; "it is like to be long ere thou getst another meal."

"Tell me but one thing, wretch," said the Prince. "Does Ramorny know of this practice?"

"How else hadst thou been decoyed hither? Poor woodcock, thou art snared!" answered the murderer.

With these words the door shut, the bolts resounded, and the unhappy Prince was left to darkness, solitude, and misery. "Oh, my father!—my prophetic father! The staff I leaned on has indeed proved a spear!" We will not dwell on the subsequent hours, nay days, of bodily agony and mental despair.

But it was not the pleasure of Heaven that so great a crime should be perpetrated with impunity.

Catharine Glover and the glee-woman, neglected by the other inmates, who seemed to be engaged with the tidings of the Prince's illness, were, however, refused permission to leave the Castle, until it should be seen how this alarming disease was to terminate, and whether it was actually an infectious sickness. Forced on each other's society, the two desolate women became companions, if not friends; and the union drew somewhat closer, when Catharine discovered that this was the same female minstrel on whose account Henry Wynd had fallen under her displeasure. She now heard his complete vindication, and listened with ardour to the praises which Louise heaped on her gallant

protector. On the other hand, the minstrel, who felt the superiority of Catharine's station and character, willingly dwelt upon a theme which seemed to please her, and recorded her gratitude to the stout Smith in the little song of "Bold and True," which was long a favourite in Scotland.

"Oh, Bold and True,
In bonnet blue,
That fear or falsehood never knew;
Whose heart was loyal to his word,
Whose hand was faithful to his sword—
Seek Europe wide from sea to sea,
But bonny Blue-cap still for me!

"I've seen Almain's proud champions prance—
Have seen the gallant knights of France,
Unrivall'd with the sword and lance—
Have seen the sons of England true,
Wield the brown bill and bend the yew.
Search France the fair, and England free,
But bonny Blue-cap still for me!"

In short, though Louise's disreputable occupation would have been in other circumstances an objection to Catharine's voluntarily frequenting her company, yet, forced together as they now were, she found her a humble and accommodating companion.

They lived in this manner for four or five days, and, in order to avoid as much as possible the gaze, and perhaps the incivility, of the menials in the offices, they prepared their food in their own apartment. In the absolutely necessary intercourse with domestics, Louise, more accustomed to expedients, bolder by habit, and desirous to please Catharine, willingly took on herself the trouble of getting from the pantler the materials of their slender meal, and of arranging it with the dexterity of her country.

The glee-woman had been abroad for this purpose upon the sixth day, a little before noon; and the desire of fresh air, or the hope to find some salad or pot-herbs, or at least an early flower or two, with which to deck their board, had carried her into the small garden appertaining to the castle. She re-entered her apartment in the tower with a countenance pale as ashes, and a frame which trembled like an aspen-leaf. Her terror instantly extended itself to Catharine, who could hardly find words to ask what new misfortune had occurred.

"Is the Duke of Rothsay dead?"

"Worse! they are starving him alive."

"Madness, woman!"

"No, no, no, no!" said Louise, speaking under her breath, and huddling her words so thick upon each other, that Catharine could hardly catch the sense. "I was seeking for flowers to dress your pottage, because you said you loved them yesterday—my poor little

dog, thrusting himself into a thicket of yew and holly bushes that grow out of some old ruins close to the castle-wall, came back whining and howling. I crept forward to see what might be the cause—and, oh! I heard a groaning as of one in extreme pain, but so faint, that it seemed to arise out of the very depth of the earth. At length, I found it proceeded from a small rent in the wall, covered with ivy; and when I laid my ear close to the opening, I could hear the Prince's voice distinctly say,—'It cannot now last long;' and then it sunk away in something like a prayer."

"Gracious Heaven!—did you speak to him?"

"I said, 'Is it you, my lord?' and the answer was, 'Who mocks me with that title?'—I asked him if I could help him, and he answered with a voice I shall never forget,—'Food!—food!—I die of famine!' So I came hither to tell you. What is to be done? Shall we alarm the house——?"

"Alas! that were more likely to destroy than to aid him," said Catharine.

"And what then shall we do?" said Louise.

"I know not yet," said Catharine, prompt and bold on occasions of moment, though yielding to her companion in ingenuity of resource on ordinary occasions. "I know not yet—but something we will do—the blood of Bruce shall not die unaided."

So saying, she seized the small cruise which contained their soup, and the meat of which it was made, wrapped some thin cakes which she had baked, into the fold of her plaid, and, beckoning her companion to follow with a vessel of milk, also part of their provisions, she hastened towards the garden.

"So, our fair vestal is stirring abroad?" said the only man she met, who was one of the menials; but Catharine passed on without notice or reply, and gained the little garden without farther interruption.

Louise indicated to her a heap of ruins, which, covered with underwood, was close to the castle-wall. It had probably been originally a projection from the building; and the small fissure, which communicated with the dungeon, contrived for air, had terminated within it. But the aperture had been a little enlarged by decay, and admitted a dim ray of light to its recesses, although it could not be observed by those who visited the place with torch-light aids.

"Here is dead silence," said Catharine, after she had listened attentively for a moment. "Heaven and earth, he is gone!"

"We must risk something," said her companion, and run her finger over the strings of her guitar.

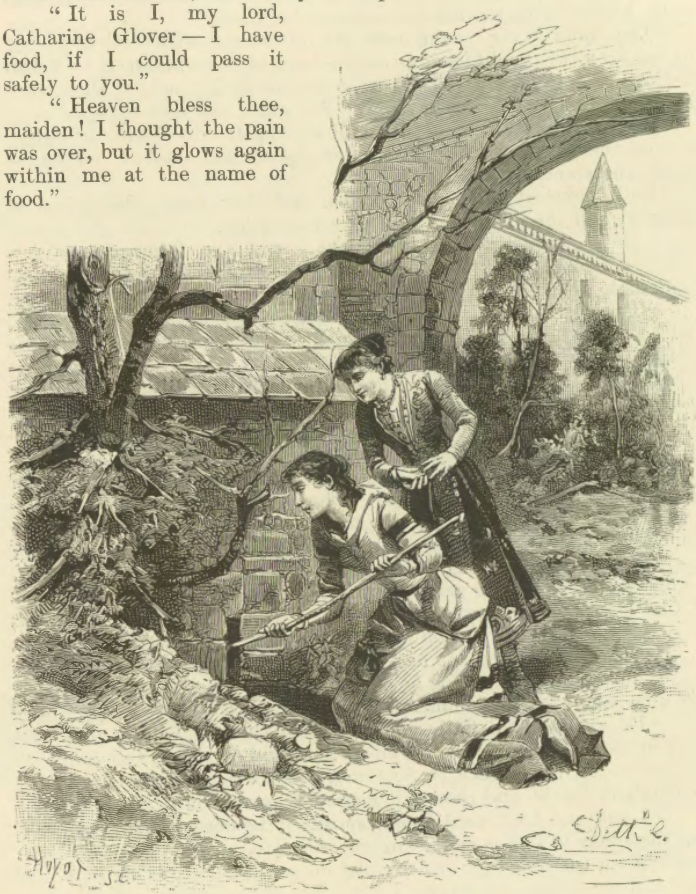
A sigh was the only answer from the depth of the dungeon. Catharine then ventured to speak. "I am here, my lord—I am here, with food and drink."

"Ha! Ramorny? The jest comes too late—I am dying," was the answer.

His brain is turned, and no wonder, thought Catharine; but whilst there is life, there may be hope.

"It is I, my lord, Catharine Glover — I have food, if I could pass it safely to you."

"Heaven bless thee, maiden! I thought the pain was over, but it glows again within me at the name of food."



Catharine and Louise feeding the Duke of Rothsay.

"The food is here, but how, ah how, can I pass it to you? The chink is so narrow, the wall is so thick! Yet there is a remedy—I have it. Quick, Louise; cut me a willow bough, the tallest you can find."

The glee-maiden obeyed, and by means of a cleft in the top of the wand, Catharine transmitted several morsels of the soft cakes, soaked in broth, which served at once for food and for drink.

The unfortunate young man ate little, and with difficulty, but prayed for a thousand blessings on the head of his comforter. "I had destined thee to be the slave of my vices," he said, "and yet thou triest to become the preserver of my life! But away, and save thyself."

"I will return with food as I shall see opportunity," said Catharine, just as the glee-maiden plucked her sleeve, and desired her to be silent, and stand close.

Both couched among the ruins, and they heard the voices of Ramorny and the mediciner in close conversation.

"He is stronger than I thought," said the former, in a low croaking tone. "How long held out Dalwolsy, when the Knight of Liddesdale prisoned him in his Castle of Hermitage?"

"For a fortnight," answered Dwining; "but he was a strong man, and had some assistance by grain which fell from a granary above his prison-house."*

"Were it not better end the matter more speedily? The Black Douglas comes this way. He is not in Albany's secret. He will demand to see the Prince, and all *must* be over ere he comes."

They passed on in their dark and fatal conversation.

"Now gain we the tower," said Catharine to her companion, when she saw they had left the garden. "I had a plan of escape for myself—I will turn it into one of rescue for the Prince. The dey-woman enters the Castle about vesper time, and usually leaves her cloak in the passage as she goes into the pantler's office with the milk. Take thou the cloak, muffle thyself close, and pass the warder boldly; he is usually drunken at that hour, and thou wilt go, as the dey-woman, unchallenged through gate and along bridge, if thou bear thyself with confidence. Then away to meet the Black Douglas; he is our nearest and only aid."

"But," said Louise, "is he not that terrible lord who threatened me with shame and punishment?"

"Believe it," said Catharine, "such as thou or I never dwelt an hour in the Douglas's memory, either for good or evil. Tell him that his son-in-law, the Prince of Scotland, dies—treacherously famished—in Falkland Castle, and thou wilt merit not pardon only, but reward."

"I care not for reward," said Louise; "the deed will reward itself. But methinks to stay is more dangerous than to go. Let me stay, then, and nourish the unhappy Prince; and do you depart to bring help. If they kill me before you return, I leave you my poor lute, and pray you to be kind to my poor Charlot."

* Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie having irritated William Douglas, Lord of Galloway, by obtaining the Sheriffship of Teviotdale, which the haughty baron considered due to himself, was surprised in Hawick while exercising his office, and confined in Hermitage Castle until he died of famine in June, A.D. 1342. Godscroft mentions the circumstance of the grain dropping from the oornloft.—P. 75.

"No, Louise," replied Catharine, "you are a more privileged and experienced wanderer than I—do you go—and if you find me dead on your return, as may well chance, give my poor father this ring, and a lock of my hair, and say, Catharine died in endeavouring to save the blood of Bruce. And give this other lock to Henry; say, Catharine thought of him to the last; and that if he has judged her too scrupulous touching the blood of others, he will then know it was not because she valued her own."

They sobbed in each other's arms, and the intervening hours till evening were spent in endeavouring to devise some better mode of supplying the captive with nourishment, and in the construction of a tube, composed of hollow reeds, slipping into each other, by which liquids might be conveyed to him. The bell of the village church of Falkland tolled to vespers. The dey,* or farm-woman, entered with her pitchers, to deliver the milk for the family, and to hear and tell the news stirring. She had scarcely entered the kitchen, when the female minstrel, again throwing herself in Catharine's arms, and assuring her of her unalterable fidelity, crept in silence down stairs, the little dog under her arm. A moment after, she was seen by the breathless Catharine, wrapt in the dey-woman's cloak, and walking composedly across the drawbridge.

"So," said the warder, "you return early to-night, May Bridget? Small mirth towards in the hall—Ha, wench!—Sick times are sad times!"

"I have forgotten my tallies," said the ready-witted Frenchwoman, "and will return in the skimming of a bowie." †

She went onward, avoiding the village of Falkland, and took a footpath which led through the park. Catharine breathed freely, and blessed God when she saw her lost in the distance. It was another anxious hour for Catharine, which occurred before the escape of the fugitive was discovered. This happened so soon as the dey-girl, having taken an hour to perform a task which ten minutes might have accomplished, was about to return, and discovered that some one had taken away her grey frieze cloak. A strict search was set on foot; at length the women of the house remembered the glee-maiden, and ventured to suggest her as one not unlikely to exchange an old cloak for a new one. The warder, strictly questioned, averred he saw the dey-woman depart immediately after vespers; and on this being contradicted by the party herself, he could suggest, as the only alternative, that it must needs have been the devil.

As, however, the glee-woman could not be found, the real circumstances of the case were easily guessed at; and the steward

* Hence, perhaps, dairy-woman and dairy.

† *i.e.* A small milk-pail. One of the sweetest couplets in The Gentle Shepherd is,—

"To bear the milk-bowie no pain was to me,
When I at the buchting forgather'd wi' thee."

went to inform Sir John Ramorny and Dwining, who were now scarcely ever separate, of the escape of one of their female captives. Every thing awakens the suspicions of the guilty. They looked on each other with faces of dismay, and then went together to the humble apartment of Catharine, that they might take her as much as possible by surprise, while they inquired into the facts attending Louise's disappearance.

"Where is your companion, young woman?" said Ramorny, in a tone of austere gravity.

"I have no companion here," answered Catharine.

"Trifle not," replied the Knight; "I mean the glee-maiden, who lately dwelt in this chamber with you."

"She is gone, they tell me," said Catharine, "gone about an hour since."

"And whither?" said Dwining.

"How," answered Catharine, "should I know which way a professed wanderer may choose to travel? She was tired, no doubt, of a solitary life, so different from the scenes of feasting and dancing which her trade leads her to frequent. She is gone, and the only wonder is that she should have stayed so long."

"This, then," said Ramorny, "is all you have to tell us?"

"All that I have to tell you, Sir John," answered Catharine, firmly; "and if the Prince himself inquire, I can tell him no more."

"There is little danger of his again doing you the honour to speak to you in person," said Ramorny, "even if Scotland should escape being rendered miserable by the sad event of his decease."

"Is the Duke of Rothsay so very ill?" asked Catharine.

"No help, save in Heaven," answered Ramorny, looking upward.

"Then may there yet be help there," said Catharine, "if human aid prove unavailing!"

"Amen!" said Ramorny, with the most determined gravity; while Dwining adopted a face fit to echo the feeling, though it seemed to cost him a painful struggle to suppress his sneering yet soft laugh of triumph, which was peculiarly excited by any thing having a religious tendency.

"And it is men—earthly men, and not incarnate devils, who thus appeal to heaven, while they are devouring by inches the life-blood of their hapless master!" muttered Catharine, as her two baffled inquisitors left the apartment. "Why sleeps the thunder? But it will roll ere long, and oh! may it be to preserve as well as to punish!"

The hour of dinner alone afforded a space, when, all in the Castle being occupied with that meal, Catharine thought she had the best opportunity of venturing to the breach in the wall, with the least chance of being observed. In waiting for the hour, she observed some stir in the Castle, which had been silent as the grave ever since the seclusion of the Duke of Rothsay. The portcullis was lowered and

raised, and the creaking of the machinery was intermingled with the tramp of horse, as men-at-arms went out and returned with steeds hard-ridden and covered with foam. She observed, too, that such domestics as she casually saw from her window were in arms. All this made her heart throb high, for it augured the approach of rescue; and besides, the bustle left the little garden more lonely than ever. At length, the hour of noon arrived; she had taken care to provide, under pretence of her own wishes, which the pantler seemed disposed to indulge, such articles of food as could be the most easily conveyed to the unhappy captive. She whispered to intimate her presence—there was no answer—she spoke louder, still there was silence.

"He sleeps," she muttered these words half aloud, and with a shuddering which was succeeded by a start and a scream, when a voice replied behind her,—

"Yes, he sleeps—but it is for ever."

She looked round—Sir John Ramorny stood behind her in complete armour, but the visor of his helmet was up, and displayed a countenance more resembling one about to die than to fight. He spoke with a grave tone, something between that of a calm observer of an interesting event, and of one who is an agent and a partaker in it.

"Catharine," he said, "all is true which I tell you. He is dead—you have done your best for him—you can do no more."

"I will not—I cannot believe it," said Catharine. "Heaven be merciful to me! It would make one doubt of Providence, to think so great a crime has been accomplished."

"Doubt not of Providence, Catharine, though it has suffered the profligate to fall by his own devices. Follow me—I have that to say which concerns you. I say follow," (for she hesitated,) "unless you prefer being left to the mercies of the brute Bonthron, and the mediciner Henbane Dwining."

"I will follow you," said Catharine. "You cannot do more to me than you are permitted."

He led the way into the tower, and mounted staircase after staircase, and ladder after ladder.

Catharine's resolution failed her. "I will follow no farther," she said. "Whither would you lead me? If to my death, I can die here."

"Only to the battlements of the castle, fool," said Ramorny, throwing wide a barred door which opened upon the vaulted roof of the castle, where men were bending mangonels, as they called them, (military engines, that is, for throwing arrows or stones), getting ready cross-bows, and piling stones together. But the defenders did not exceed twenty in number, and Catharine thought she could observe doubt and irresolution amongst them.

"Catharine," said Ramorny, "I must not quit this station, which is necessary for my defence; but I can speak with you here as well as elsewhere."

"Say on," answered Catharine, "I am prepared to hear you."

"You have thrust yourself, Catharine, into a bloody secret. Have you the firmness to keep it?"

"I do not understand you, Sir John," answered the maiden.

"Look you. I have slain—murdered, if you will—my late master, the Duke of Rothsay. The spark of life which your kindness would have fed was easily smothered. His last words called on his father. You are faint—bear up—you have more to hear. You know the crime, but you know not the provocation. See! this gauntlet is empty—I lost my right hand in his cause; and when I was no longer fit to serve him, I was cast off like a worn-out hound, my loss ridiculed, and a cloister recommended, instead of the halls and palaces in which I had my natural sphere! Think on this—pity and assist me."

"In what manner can you require my assistance?" said the trembling maiden; "I can neither repair your loss, nor cancel your crime."

"Thou canst be silent, Catharine, on what thou hast seen and heard in yonder thicket. It is but a brief oblivion I ask of you, whose word will, I know, be listened to, whether you say such things were or were not. That of your mountebank companion, the foreigner, none will hold to be of a pin-point's value. If you grant me this, I will take your promise for my security, and throw the gate open to those who now approach it. If you will not promise silence, I defend this Castle till every one perishes, and I fling you headlong from these battlements. Ay, look at them—it is not a leap to be rashly braved. Seven courses of stairs brought you up hither with fatigue and shortened breath; but you shall go from the top to the bottom in briefer time than you can breathe a sigh! Speak the word, fair maid; for you speak to one unwilling to harm you, but determined in his purpose."

Catharine stood terrified, and without power of answering a man who seemed so desperate; but she was saved the necessity of reply, by the approach of Dwining. He spoke with the same humble congés which at all times distinguished his manner, and with his usual suppressed ironical sneer, which gave that manner the lie.

"I do you wrong, noble sir, to intrude on your valiancy when engaged with a fair damsel. But I come to ask a trifling question."

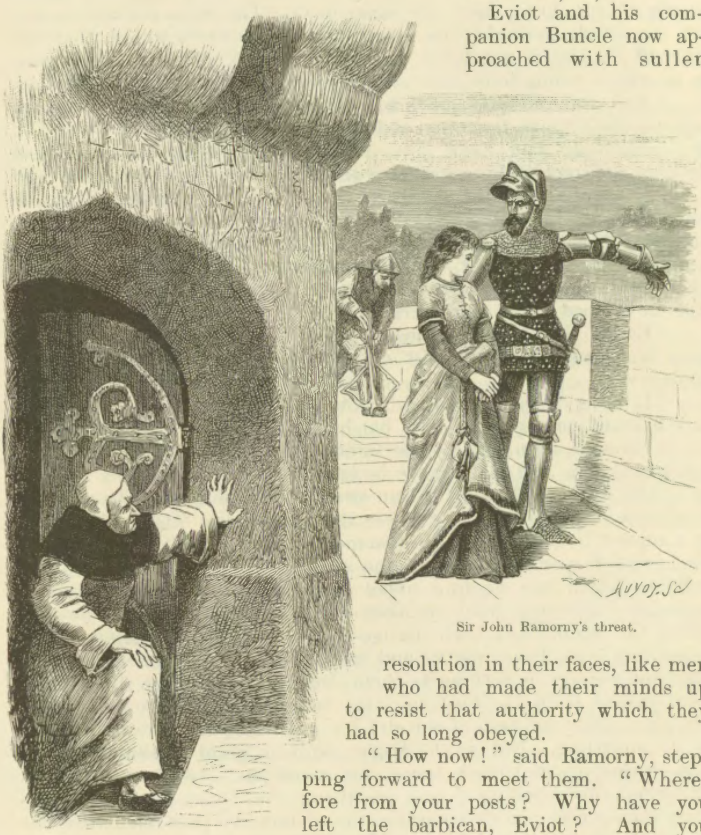
"Speak, tormentor!" said Ramorny; "ill news are sport to thee even when they affect thyself, so that they concern others also."

"Hem!—he, he!—I only desired to know if your knighthood proposed the chivalrous task of defending the Castle with your single hand—I crave pardon—I meant your single arm? The question is worth asking, for I am good for little to aid the defence, unless you could prevail on the besiegers to take physic—He, he, he!—and Bonthron is as drunk as ale and strong waters can make him—and you, he, and I, make up the whole garrison who are disposed for resistance."

"How! Will the other dogs not fight?" said Ramorny.

"Never saw men who showed less stomach to the work," answered Dwining, "never. But here come a brace of them. *Venit extrema dies.* He, he, he!"

Eviot and his companion Buncle now approached with sullen resolution in their faces, like men who had made their minds up to resist that authority which they had so long obeyed.



Sir John Ramorny's threat.

"How now!" said Ramorny, stepping forward to meet them. "Wherefore from your posts? Why have you left the barbican, Eviot? And you other fellow, did I not charge you to look to the mangonels?"

"We have something to tell you, Sir John Ramorny," answered Eviot. "We will not fight in this quarrel."

"How—my own squires control me?" exclaimed Ramorny.

"We were your squires and pages, my lord, while you were master

of the Duke of Rothsay's household. It is bruited about the Duke no longer lives—we desire to know the truth."

"What traitor dares spread such falsehoods?" said Ramorny.

"All who have gone out to skirt the forest, my lord, and I myself among others, bring back the same news. The minstrel woman who left the Castle yesterday has spread the report every where, that the Duke of Rothsay is murdered, or at death's door. The Douglas comes on us with a strong force ——"

"And you, cowards, take advantage of an idle report to forsake your master?" said Ramorny, indignantly.

"My lord," said Eviot, "let Buncle and myself see the Duke of Rothsay, and receive his personal orders for defence of this Castle, and if we do not fight to the death in that quarrel, I will consent to be hanged on its highest turret. But if he be gone by natural disease, we will yield up the Castle to the Earl of Douglas, who is, they say, the King's Lieutenant. Or if,—which Heaven forefend!—the noble Prince has had foul play, we will not involve ourselves in the guilt of using arms in defence of the murderers, be they who they will."

"Eviot," said Ramorny, raising his mutilated arm, "had not that glove been empty, thou hadst not lived to utter two words of this insolence."

"It is as it is," answered Eviot, "and we do but our duty. I have followed you long, my lord, but here I draw bridle."

"Farewell, then, and a curse light on all of you!" exclaimed the incensed Baron. "Let my horse be brought forth!"

"Our Valiancy is about to run away," said the mediciner, who had crept close to Catharine's side before she was aware. "Catharine, thou art a superstitious fool, like most women; nevertheless thou hast some mind, and I speak to thee as one of more understanding than the buffaloes which are herding about us. These haughty barons who overstride the world, what are they in the day of adversity?—chaff before the wind. Let their sledge-hammer hands, or their column-resembling legs, have injury, and bah!—the men-at-arms are gone—heart and courage is nothing to them, lith and limb every thing—give them animal strength, what are they better than furious bulls—take that away, and your hero of chivalry lies grovelling like the brute when he is hamstrung. Not so the Sage; while a grain of sense remains in a crushed or mutilated frame, his mind shall be strong as ever. Catharine, this morning I was practising your death; but methinks I now rejoice that you may survive, to tell how the poor mediciner, the pill-gilder, the mortar-pounder, the poison-vendor, met his fate, in company with the gallant Knight of Ramorny, Baron in possession, and Earl of Lindores in expectation—God save his lordship!"

"Old man," said Catharine, "if thou be indeed so near the day of thy deserved doom, other thoughts were far wholesomer than the vainglorious ravings of a vain philosophy. Ask to see a holy man ——"

"Yes," said Dwining, scornfully, "refer myself to a greasy monk, who does not—he! he! he!—understand the barbarous Latin he repeats by rote. Such would be a fitting counsellor to one who has studied both in Spain and Arabia! No, Catharine, I will choose a confessor that is pleasant to look upon, and you shall be honoured with the office. Now, look yonder at his Valiancy—his eyebrow drops with moisture, his lip trembles with agony; for his Valiancy,—he! he! he!—is pleading for his life with his late domestics, and has not eloquence enough to persuade them to let him slip. See how the fibres of his face work as he implores the ungrateful brutes, whom he has heaped with obligations, to permit him to get such a start for his life as the hare has from the greyhounds when men course her fairly. Look also at the sullen, downcast, dogged faces with which, fluctuating between fear and shame, the domestic traitors deny their lord this poor chance for his life. These things thought themselves the superior of a man like me; and you, foolish wench, think so meanly of your Deity, as to suppose wretches like them are the work of Omnipotence!"

"No! man of evil, no!" said Catharine, warmly; "the God I worship created these men with the attributes to know and adore him, to guard and defend their fellow-creatures, to practise holiness and virtue. Their own vices, and the temptations of the Evil One, have made them such as they now are. Oh, take the lesson home to thine own heart of adamant! Heaven made thee wiser than thy fellows, gave thee eyes to look into the secrets of nature, a sagacious heart, and a skilful hand; but thy pride has poisoned all these fair gifts, and made an ungodly Atheist of one who might have been a Christian sage!"

"Atheist, say'st thou?" answered Dwining; "perhaps I have doubts on that matter—but they will be soon solved. Yonder comes one who will send me, as he has done thousands, to the place where all mysteries shall be cleared."

Catharine followed the mediciner's eye up one of the forest glades, and beheld it occupied by a body of horsemen advancing at full gallop. In the midst was a pennon displayed, which, though its bearings were not visible to Catharine, was, by a murmur around, acknowledged as that of the Black Douglas. They halted within arrow-shot of the Castle, and a herald with two trumpets advanced up to the main portal, where, after a loud flourish, he demanded admittance for the high and dreaded Archibald Earl of Douglas, Lord Lieutenant of the King, and acting for the time with the plenary authority of his Majesty; commanding, at the same time that the inmates of the Castle should lay down their arms, all under penalty of high treason.

"You hear?" said Eviot to Ramorny, who stood sullen and undecided. "Will you give orders to render the Castle, or must I——"

"No, villain!" interrupted the Knight, "to the last I will

command you. Open the gates, drop the bridge, and render the castle to the Douglas."

"Now, that's what may be called a gallant exertion of free-will," said Dwining. "Just as if the pieces of brass that were screaming a minute since, should pretend to call those notes their own, which are breathed through them by a frowsy trumpeter."

"Wretched man," said Catharine, "either be silent, or turn thy thoughts to the eternity on the brink of which thou art standing."

"And what is that to thee?" answered Dwining. "Thou canst not, wench, help hearing what I say to thee, and thou wilt tell it again, for thy sex cannot help that either. Perth and all Scotland shall know, what a man they have lost in Henbane Dwining!"

The clash of armour now announced that the new comers had dismounted and entered the Castle, and were in the act of disarming the small garrison. Earl Douglas himself appeared on the battlements, with a few of his followers, and signed to them to take Ramorny and Dwining into custody. Others dragged from some nook the stupefied Bonthron.

"It was to these three that the custody of the Prince was solely committed, during his alleged illness?" said the Douglas, prosecuting an inquiry which he had commenced in the hall of the Castle.

"No other saw him, my lord," said Eviot, "though I offered my services."

"Conduct us to the Duke's apartment, and bring the prisoners with us. Also there should be a female in the Castle, if she hath not been murdered or spirited away—the companion of the glee-maiden who brought the first alarm."

"She is here, my lord," said Eviot, bringing Catharine forward.

Her beauty and her agitation made some impression even upon the impassible Earl.

"Fear nothing, maiden," he said; "thou hast deserved both praise and reward. Tell to me, as thou wouldst confess to Heaven, the things thou hast witnessed in this Castle?"

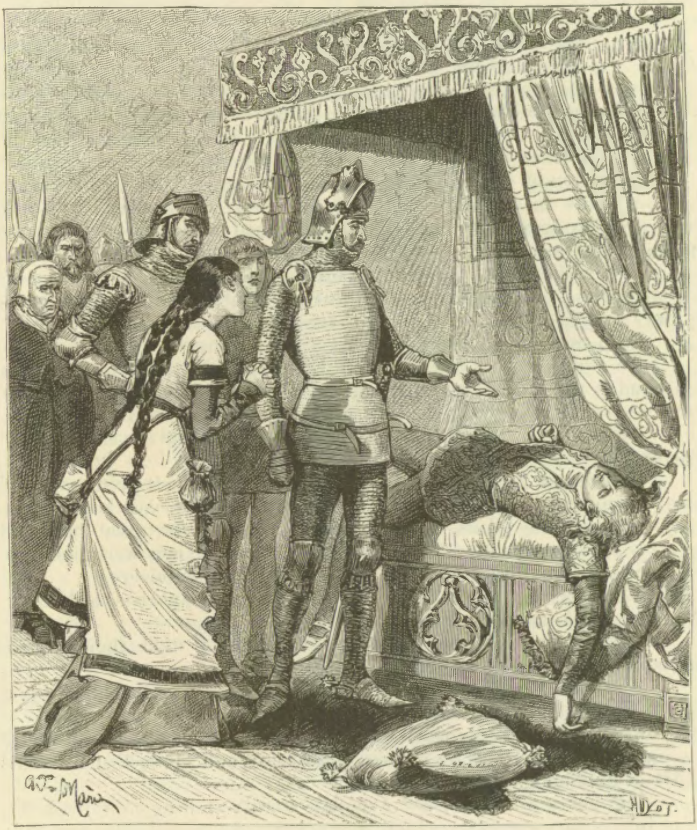
Few words served Catharine to unfold the dreadful story.

"It agrees," said the Douglas, "with the tale of the glee-maiden, from point to point. Now show us the Prince's apartment."

They passed to the room which the unhappy Duke of Rothsay had been supposed to inhabit; but the key was not to be found, and the Earl could only obtain entrance by forcing the door. On entering, the wasted and squalid remains of the unhappy Prince were discovered, flung on the bed as if in haste. The intention of the murderers had apparently been to arrange the dead body, so as to resemble a timely parted corpse, but they had been disconcerted by the alarm occasioned by the escape of Louise. Douglas looked on the body of the misguided youth, whose wild passions and caprices had brought him to this fatal and premature catastrophe.

"I had wrongs to be redressed," he said; "but to see such a sight as this banishes all remembrance of injury!"

"He! he! It should have been arranged," said Dwining, "more



Douglas and the corpse of the Duke of Rothsay.

to your omnipotence's pleasure; but you came suddenly on us, and hasty masters make slovenly service."

Douglas seemed not to hear what his prisoner said, so closely did

he examine the wan and wasted features, and stiffened limbs, of the dead body before him. Catharine, overcome by sickness and fainting, at length obtained permission to retire from the dreadful scene, and, through confusion of every description, found her way to her former apartment, where she was locked in the arms of Louise, who had returned in the interval.

The investigations of Douglas proceeded. The dying hand of the Prince was found to be clenched upon a lock of hair, resembling, in colour and texture, the coal-black bristles of Bonthron. Thus, though famine had begun the work, it would seem that Rothsay's death had been finally accomplished by violence. The private stair to the dungeon, the keys of which were found at the subaltern assassin's belt, —the situation of the vault, its communications with the external air by the fissure in the walls, and the wretched lair of straw, with the fetters which remained there,—fully confirmed the story of Catharine and of the glee-woman.

"We will not hesitate an instant," said the Douglas to his near kinsman, the Lord Balveny, as soon as they returned from the dungeon. "Away with the murderers! hang them over the battlements."

"But, my lord, some trial may be fitting," answered Balveny.

"To what purpose?" answered Douglas. "I have taken them red-hand;* my authority will stretch to instant execution. Yet stay—have we not some Jedwood men in our troop?"

"Plenty of Turnbulls, Rutherfords, Ainslies, and so forth," said Balveny.

"Call me an inquest of these together; they are all good men and true, saving a little shifting for their living. Do you see to the execution of these felons, while I hold a court in the great hall, and we'll try whether the jury or the provost-marshal do their work first; we will have Jedwood justice,—hang in haste, and try at leisure."

"Yet stay, my lord," said Ramorny, "you may rue your haste. Will you grant me a word out of ear-shot?"

"Not for worlds!" said Douglas; "speak out what thou hast to say before all that are here present."

"Know all, then," said Ramorny, aloud, "that this noble Earl had letters from the Duke of Albany and myself, sent him by the hand of yon cowardly deserter, Buncle—let him deny it if he dare,—counselling the removal of the Duke for a space from court, and his seclusion in this Castle of Falkland."

"But not a word," replied Douglas, sternly smiling, "of his being flung into a dungeon—famished—strangled. Away with the wretches, Balveny, they pollute God's air too long!"

The prisoners were dragged off to the battlements. But while the means of execution were in the act of being prepared, the apothecary expressed so ardent a desire to see Catharine once more, and, as he said,

* Note XIX. Red-hand.

for the good of his soul, that the maiden, in hopes his obduracy might have undergone some change even at the last hour, consented again to go to the battlements, and face a scene which her heart recoiled from. A single glance showed her Bonthron, sunk in total and drunken insensibility; Ramorny, stripped of his armour, endeavouring in vain to conceal fear, while he spoke with a priest, whose good offices he had solicited; and Dwining, the same humble, obsequious-looking, crouching individual she had always known him. He held in his hand a little silver pen, with which he had been writing on a scrap of parchment.

"Catharine," he said,—"he, he, he!—I wish to speak to thee on the nature of my religious faith."

"If such be thy intention, why lose time with me? Speak with this good father."

"The good father," said Dwining, "is—he, he!—already a worshipper of the Deity whom I have served. I therefore prefer to give the altar of mine idol a new worshipper in thee, Catharine. This scrap of parchment will tell thee how to make your way into my chapel, where I have worshipped so often in safety. I leave the images which it contains to thee as a legacy, simply because I hate and contemn thee something less than any of the absurd wretches whom I have hitherto been obliged to call fellow-creatures. And now away!—or remain and see if the end of the quacksalver belies his life."

"Our Lady forbid!" said Catharine.

"Nay," said the mediciner, "I have but a single word to say, and yonder nobleman's valiancy may hear it if he will."

Lord Balveny approached, with some curiosity; for the undaunted resolution of a man who never wielded sword or bore armour, and was in person a poor dwindled dwarf, had to him an air of something resembling sorcery.

"You see this trifling implement," said the criminal, showing the silver pen. "By means of this I can escape the power even of the Black Douglas."

"Give him no ink nor paper," said Balveny, hastily, "he will draw a spell."

"Not so, please your wisdom and valiancy,—he, he, he!"—said Dwining, with his usual chuckle, as he unscrewed the top of the pen, within which was a piece of sponge, or some such substance, no bigger than a pea. "Now, mark this," said the prisoner, and drew it between his lips. The effect was instantaneous. He lay a dead corpse before them, the contemptuous sneer still on his countenance.

Catharine shrieked and fled, seeking, by a hasty descent, an escape from a sight so appalling. Lord Balveny was for a moment stupefied, and then exclaimed, "This may be glamour! hang him over the battlements, quick or dead. If his foul spirit hath only withdrawn for a space, it shall return to a body with a dislocated neck."

His commands were obeyed. Ramorny and Bonthron were then ordered for execution. The last was hanged before he seemed quite to comprehend what was designed to be done with him. Ramorny, pale as death, yet with the same spirit of pride which had occasioned his ruin, pleaded his knighthood, and demanded the privilege of dying by decapitation by the sword, and not by the noose."

"The Douglas never alters his doom," said Balveny. "But thou shalt have all thy rights.—Send the cook hither with a cleaver." The menial whom he called appeared at his summons. "What shakest thou for, fellow?" said Balveny; "here, strike me this man's gilt spurs from his heels with thy cleaver—And now, John Ramorny, thou art no longer a knight, but a knave—To the halter with him, provost-marshal! hang him betwixt his companions, and higher than them if it may be."

In a quarter of an hour afterwards, Balveny descended to tell the Douglas that the criminals were executed.

"Then there is no further use in the trial," said the Earl. "How say you, good men of inquest, were these men guilty of high-treason—ay or no?"

"Guilty," exclaimed the obsequious inquest, with edifying unanimity, "we need no farther evidence."

"Sound trumpets, and to horse then, with our own train only; and let each man keep silence on what has chanced here, until the proceedings shall be laid before the King, which cannot conveniently be till the battle of Palm Sunday shall be fought and ended. Select our attendants, and tell each man who either goes with us or remains behind, that he who prates dies."

In a few minutes the Douglas was on horseback, with the followers selected to attend his person. Expresses were sent to his daughter, the widowed Duchess of Rothsay, directing her to take her course to Perth, by the shores of Lochleven, without approaching Falkland, and committing to her charge Catharine Glover and the glee-woman, as persons whose safety he tendered.

As they rode through the forest, they looked back, and beheld the three bodies hanging, like specks darkening the walls of the old castle.

"The hand is punished," said Douglas; "but who shall arraign the head by whose direction the act was done!"

"You mean the Duke of Albany?" said Balveny.

"I do, kinsman; and were I to listen to the dictates of my heart, I would charge him with the deed, which I am certain he has authorized. But there is no proof of it beyond strong suspicion, and Albany has attached to himself the numerous friends of the House of Stewart, to whom, indeed, the imbecility of the King, and the ill-regulated habits of Rothsay, left no other choice of a leader. Were I, therefore, to break the band which I have so lately formed with Albany, the

consequence must be civil war, an event ruinous to poor Scotland, while threatened by invasion from the activity of the Percy, backed by the treachery of March. No, Balveny—the punishment of Albany must rest with Heaven, which, in its own good time, will execute judgment on him and on his house."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"The hour is nigh: now hearts beat high:
Each sword is sharpen'd well;
And who dares die, who stoops to fly,
To-morrow's light shall tell."

Sir Edwald.

WE are now to recall to our reader's recollection, that Simon Glover and his fair daughter had been hurried from their residence without having time to announce to Henry Smith, either their departure or the alarming cause of it. When, therefore, the lover appeared in Curfew Street on the morning of their flight, instead of the hearty welcome of the honest burgher, and the April reception, half joy, half censure, which he had been promised on the part of his lovely daughter, he received only the astounding intelligence, that her father and she had set off early, on the summons of a stranger, who had kept himself carefully muffled from observation. To this, Dorothy, whose talents for forestalling evil, and communicating her views of it, are known to the reader, chose to add, that she had no doubt her master and young mistress were bound for the Highlands, to avoid a visit which had been made since their departure, by two or three apparitors, who, in the name of a Commission appointed by the King, had searched the house, put seals upon such places as were supposed to contain papers, and left citations for father and daughter to appear before the Court of Commission on a day certain, under pain of outlawry. All these alarming particulars Dorothy took care to state in the gloomiest colours, and the only consolation which she afforded the alarmed lover was, that her master had charged her to tell him to reside quietly at Perth, and that he should soon

hear news of them. This checked the Smith's first resolve, which was to follow them instantly to the Highlands, and partake the fate which they might encounter.

But when he recollected his repeated feuds with divers of the Clan Quhele, and particularly his personal quarrel with Conachar, who was now raised to be a high chief, he could not but think, on reflection, that his intrusion on their place of retirement was more likely to disturb the safety which they might otherwise enjoy there, than be of any service to them. He was well acquainted with Simon's habitual intimacy with the Chief of the Clan Quhele, and justly augured that the Glover would obtain protection, which his own arrival might be likely to disturb, while his personal prowess could little avail him in a quarrel with a whole tribe of vindictive mountaineers. At the same time his heart throbbed with indignation, when he thought of Catharine being within the absolute power of young Conachar, whose rivalry he could not doubt, and who had now so many means of urging his suit. What if the young Chief should make the safety of the father depend on the favour of the daughter? He distrusted not Catharine's affections; but then her mode of thinking was so disinterested, and her attachment to her father so tender, that, if the love she bore her suitor was weighed against his security, or perhaps his life, it was matter of deep and awful doubt, whether it might not be found light in the balance. Tormented by thoughts on which we need not dwell, he resolved nevertheless to remain at home, stifle his anxiety as he might, and await the promised intelligence from the old man. It came, but it did not relieve his concern.

Sir Patrick Charteris had not forgotten his promise to communicate to the Smith the plans of the fugitives. But amid the bustle occasioned by the movement of troops, he could not himself convey the intelligence. He therefore intrusted to his agent, Kitt Henshaw, the task of making it known. But this worthy person, as the reader knows, was in the interest of Ramorny, whose business it was to conceal from every one, but especially from a lover so active and daring as Henry, the real place of Catharine's residence. Henshaw therefore announced to the anxious Smith, that his friend the Glover was secure in the Highlands; and though he affected to be more reserved on the subject of Catharine, he said little to contradict the belief, that she as well as Simon shared the protection of the Clan Quhele. But he reiterated, in the name of Sir Patrick, assurances that father and daughter were both well, and that Henry would best consult his own interest and their safety, by remaining quiet, and waiting the course of events.

With an agonized heart, therefore, Henry Gow determined to remain quiet till he had more certain intelligence, and employed himself in finishing a shirt of mail, which he intended should be the best tempered, and the most finely polished, that his skilful hands had ever executed. This exercise of his craft pleased him better than any other

occupation which he could have adopted, and served as an apology for secluding himself in his workshop, and shunning society, where the idle reports which were daily circulated, served only to perplex and disturb him. He resolved to trust in the warm regard of Simon, the faith of his daughter, and the friendship of the Provost, who, having so highly commended his valour in the combat with Bonthron, would never, he thought, desert him at this extremity of his fortunes. Time, however, passed on day by day; and it was not till Palm Sunday was near approaching, that Sir Patrick Charteris, having entered the city to make some arrangements for the ensuing combat, bethought himself of making a visit to the Smith of the Wynd.

He entered his work-shop with an air of sympathy unusual to him, and which made Henry instantly augur that he brought bad news. The Smith caught the alarm, and the uplifted hammer was arrested in its descent upon the heated iron, while the agitated arm that wielded it, strong before as that of a giant, became so powerless, that it was with difficulty Henry was able to place the weapon on the ground, instead of dropping it from his hand.

"My poor Henry," said Sir Patrick, "I bring you but cold news—they are uncertain, however; and, if true, they are such as a brave man like you should not take too deeply to heart."

"In God's name, my lord," said Henry, "I trust you bring no evil news of Simon Glover or his daughter?"

"Touching themselves," said Sir Patrick, "no; they are safe and well. But as to thee, Henry, my tidings are more cold. Kitt Henshaw has, I think, apprized thee that I had endeavoured to provide Catharine Glover with a safe protection in the house of an honourable lady, the Duchess of Rothsay. But she hath declined the charge; and Catharine hath been sent to her father in the Highlands. What is worst is to come. Thou mayest have heard that Gilchrist MacIan is dead, and that his son Eachin, who was known in Perth as the apprentice of old Simon, by the name of Conachar, is now the Chief of Clan Quhele; and I heard from one of my domestics, that there is a strong rumour among the MacIans, that the young Chief seeks the hand of Catharine in marriage. My domestic learned this (as a secret, however) while in the Breadalbane country, on some arrangements touching the ensuing combat. The thing is uncertain; but, Henry, it wears a face of likelihood."

"Did your lordship's servant see Simon Glover and his daughter?" said Henry, struggling for breath, and coughing, to conceal from the Provost the excess of his agitation.

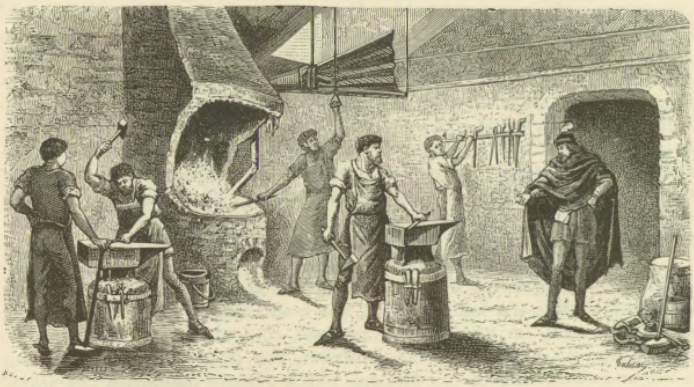
"He did not," said Sir Patrick; "the Highlanders seemed jealous, and refused to permit him to speak to the old man, and he feared to alarm them by asking to see Catharine. Besides he talks no Gaelic, nor had his informer much English, so there may be some mistake in the matter. Nevertheless there *is* such a report, and I

thought it best to tell it you. But you may be well assured, that the wedding cannot go on till the affair of Palm Sunday be over; and I advise you to take no step till we learn the circumstances of the matter, for certainty is most desirable, even when it is painful. Go you to the Council house," he added, after a pause, "to speak about the preparations for the list in the North Inch? You will be welcome there."

"No, my good lord."

"Well, Smith, I judge by your brief answer, that you are discomposed with this matter; but after all, women are weathercocks, that is the truth on't. Solomon and others have proved it before you."

And so Sir Patrick Charteris retired, fully convinced he had discharged the office of a comforter in the most satisfactory manner.



"'My poor Henry, I bring you but cold news'" (p. 416).

With very different impressions did the unfortunate lover regard the tidings, and listen to the consoling commentary.

"The Provost," he said bitterly to himself, "is an excellent man; marry, he holds his knighthood so high, that if he speaks nonsense, a poor man must hold it sense, as he must praise dead ale if it be handed to him in his lordship's silver flagon. How would all this sound in another situation? Suppose I were rolling down the steep descent of the Corrichie Dhu, and before I came to the edge of the rock, comes my Lord Provost and cries, 'Henry, there is a deep precipice, and I grieve to say you are in the fair way of rolling over it. But be not downcast, for Heaven may send a stone or a bush to stop your progress. However, I thought it would be comfort to you to know the worst, which you will be presently aware of. I do not know how many hundred feet deep the precipice descends, but you may form a judg-

ment when you are at the bottom, for certainty is certainty. And hark ye, when come you to take a game at bowls?' And this gossip is to serve instead of any friendly attempt to save the poor wight's neck! When I think of this, I could go mad, seize my hammer, and break and destroy all around me. But I will be calm; and if this Highland kite, who calls himself a falcon, should stoop at my turtle dove, he shall know whether a burgess of Perth can draw a bow or not."

It was now the Thursday before the fated Palm Sunday, and the champions on either side were expected to arrive the next day, that they might have the interval of Saturday to rest, refresh themselves, and prepare for the combat. Two or three of each of the contending parties were detached to receive directions about the encampment of their little band, and such other instructions as might be necessary to the proper ordering of the field. Henry was not, therefore, surprised at seeing a tall and powerful Highlander peering anxiously about the wynd in which he lived, in the manner in which the natives of a wild country examine the curiosities of one that is more civilized. The Smith's heart arose against the man, on account of his country, to which our Perth burgher bore a natural prejudice, and more especially as he observed the individual wear the plaid peculiar to the Clan Quhele. The sprig of oak-leaves, worked in silk, intimated also that the individual was one of those personal guards of young Eachin, upon whose exertions in the future battle so much reliance was placed by those of their clan.

Having observed so much, Henry withdrew into his smithy, for the sight of the man raised his passion; and knowing that the Highlander came plighted to a solemn combat, and could not be the subject of any inferior quarrel, he was resolved at least to avoid friendly intercourse with him. In a few minutes, however, the door of the smithy flew open, and, fluttering in his tartans, which greatly magnified his actual size, the Gael entered with the haughty step of a man conscious of a personal dignity superior to any thing which he is likely to meet with. He stood looking around him, and seemed to expect to be received with courtesy, and regarded with wonder. But Henry had no sort of inclination to indulge his vanity, and kept hammering away at a breast-plate, which was lying upon his anvil, as if he were not aware of his visitor's presence.

"You are the *Gow Chrom?*" (the bandy-legged smith) said the Highlander.

"Those that wish to be crook-backed call me so," answered Henry.

"No offence meant," said the Highlander; "but her own self comes to buy an armour."

"Her own self's bare shanks may trot hence with her," answered Henry, "I have none to sell."

"If it was not within two days of Palm Sunday, herself would make you sing another song," retorted the Gael.

"And being the day it is," said Henry, with the same contemptuous indifference, "I pray you to stand out of my light."

"You are an uncivil person; but her own self is *fir nan ord** too; and she knows the smith is fiery when the iron is hot."

"If her nainsell be hammer-man hersell, her nainsell may make her nain harness," replied Henry.

"And so her nainsell would, and never fash you for the matter; but it is said, *Gow Chrom*, that you sing and whistle tunes over the swords and harnishes that you work, that have power to make the blades cut steel-links as if they were paper, and the plate and mail turn back steel-lances as if they were boddle prins?"

"They tell your ignorance any nonsense that Christian men refuse to believe," said Henry. "I whistle at my work whatever comes uppermost, like an honest craftsman, and commonly it is the Highlandman's 'Och hone for Houghmanstares!† My hammer goes naturally to that tune."

"Friend, it is but idle to spur a horse when his legs are hamshackled," said the Highlander, haughtily. "Her own self cannot fight even now, and there is little gallantry in taunting her thus."

"By nails and hammer, you are right there," said the Smith, altering his tone. "But speak out at once, friend, what is it thou wouldst have of me? I am in no humour for dallying."

"A hauberk for her Chief, Eachin MacIan," said the Highlander.

"You are a hammerman, you say? Are you a judge of this?" said our Smith, producing from a chest the mail shirt on which he had been lately employed.

The Gael handled it with a degree of admiration which had something of envy in it. He looked curiously at every part of its texture, and at length declared it the very best piece of armour that he had ever seen.

"A hundred cows and bullocks, and a good drift of sheep, would be e'en ower cheap an offer," said the Highlandman, by way of tentative; "but her nainsell will never bid thee less, come by them how she can."

"It is a fair proffer," replied Henry; "but gold nor gear will never buy that harness I want to try my own sword on my own armour; and I will not give that mail-coat to any one but who will face me for the best of three blows and a thrust in the fair field; and it is your Chief's upon these terms."

"Hut, prut, man—take a drink, and go to bed," said the Highlander, in great scorn. "Are ye mad? Think ye the Captain of the Clan Quhele will be brawling and battling with a bit Perth burgess body like you? Whisht, man, and hearken. Her nainsell will do ye mair credit than ever belonged to your kin. She will fight you for the fair harness hersell."

* *i.e.* A man of the hammer.

† Note XX.—Ploughman Stares.

"She must first show that she is my match," said Henry, with a grim smile.

"How! I, one of Eachin MacIan's Leichtach, and not your match!"

"You may try me, if you will. You say you are a *fir nan ord*—Do you know how to cast a sledge-hammer?"

"Ay, truly—ask the eagle if he can fly over Ferragon."

"But before you strive with me, you must first try a cast with one of *my* Leichtach.—Here, Dunter, stand forth for the honour of Perth!—And now, Highlandman, there stands a row of hammers—choose which you will, and let us to the garden."

The Highlander, whose name was Norman nan Ord, or Norman of the Hammer, showed his title to the epithet by selecting the largest hammer of the set, at which Henry smiled. Dunter, the stout journeyman of the Smith, made what was called a prodigious cast; but the Highlander, making a desperate effort, threw beyond it by two or three feet, and looked with an air of triumph to Henry, who again smiled in reply.

"Will you mend that?" said the Gael, offering our Smith the hammer.

"Not with that child's toy," said Henry, "which has scarce weight to fly against the wind. Janniken, fetch me Sampson; or one of you help the boy, for Sampson is somewhat ponderous."

The hammer now produced was half as heavy again as that which the Highlander had selected as one of unusual weight. Norman stood astonished; but he was still more so when Henry, taking his position, swung the ponderous implement far behind his right haunch joint, and dismissed it from his hand as if it had flown from a warlike engine. The air groaned and whistled as the mass flew through it. Down at length it came, and the iron head sunk a foot into the earth, a full yard beyond the cast of Norman.

The Highlander, defeated and mortified, went to the spot where the weapon lay, lifted it, poised it in his hand with great wonder, and examined it closely, as if he expected to discover more in it than a common hammer. He at length returned it to the owner with a melancholy smile, shrugging his shoulders and shaking his head, as the Smith asked him whether he would not mend his cast.

"Norman has lost too much at the sport already," he replied. "She has lost her own name of the Hammerer. But does her ownself, the *Gow Chrom*, work at the anvil with that horse's load of iron?"

"You shall see, brother," said Henry, leading the way to the smithy. "Dunter," he said, "rax me that bar from the furnace;" and uplifting Sampson, as he called the monstrous hammer, he plied the metal with a hundred strokes from right to left—now with the right hand, now with the left, now with both, with so much strength at once and dexterity, that he worked off a small but beautifully

proportioned horse-shoe in half the time that an ordinary smith would have taken for the same purpose, using a more manageable implement.

"Oigh, oigh!" said the Highlander, "and what for would you be fighting with our young Chief, who is far above your standard,

Throwing the hammer.

though you were the best smith ever wrought with wind and fire?"

"Hark you!" said Henry. "You seem a good fellow, and I'll tell you the truth. Your master has wronged me, and I give him this harness freely for the chance of fighting him myself."

"Nay, if he hath wronged you, he must meet you," said the life-guardsman. "To do a man wrong takes the eagle's feather out of the Chief's bonnet; and were he the first in the Highlands, and to be sure so is Eachin, he must fight the man he has wronged, or else a rose falls from his chaplet."

"Will you move him to this," said Henry, "after the fight on Sunday?"

"Oh, her nainsell will do her best, if the hawks have not got her nainsell's bones to pick; for you must know, brother, that Clan Chattan's claws pierce rather deep."

"The armour is your Chief's on that condition," said Henry; "but I will disgrace him before King and Court if he does not pay me the price."

"Deil a fear, deil a fear; I will bring him in to the barrace myself," said Norman, "assuredly."

"You will do me a pleasure," replied Henry; "and that you may remember your promise, I will bestow on you this dirk. Look—If you hold it truly, and can strike between the mail-hood and the collar of your enemy, the surgeon will be needless."

The Highlander was lavish in his expressions of gratitude, and took his leave.

"I have given him the best mail harness I ever wrought," said the Smith to himself, rather repenting his liberality, "for the poor chance that he will bring his Chief into a fair field with me; and then let Catharine be his who can win her fairly. But much I dread the youth will find some evasion, unless he have such luck on Palm Sunday as may induce him to try another combat. That is some hope, however; for I have often, ere now, seen a raw young fellow shoot up after his first fight, from a dwarf into a giant-queller."

Thus, with little hope, but with the most determined resolution, Henry Smith awaited the time that should decide his fate. What made him augur the worst, was the silence both of the Glover and of his daughter. They are ashamed, he said, to confess the truth to me, and therefore they are silent.

Upon the Friday at noon, the two bands of thirty men each, representing the contending Clans, arrived at the several points where they were to halt for refreshments.

The Clan Quhele was entertained hospitably at the rich Abbey of Scone, while the Provost regaled their rivals at his Castle of Kinfauns; the utmost care being taken to treat both parties with the most punctilious attention, and to afford neither an opportunity of complaining of partiality. All points of etiquette were, in the meanwhile, discussed and settled by the Lord High Constable Errol, and the young Earl of Crawford, the former acting on the part of the Clan Chattan, and the latter patronising the Clan Quhele. Messengers were passing continually from the one Earl to the other, and they held more than six meetings within thirty hours, before the ceremonial of the field could be exactly arranged.

Meanwhile, in case of revival of ancient quarrel, many seeds of which existed betwixt the burghers and their mountain neighbours, a proclamation commanded the citizens not to approach within half a mile of the place where the Highlanders were quartered; while on their part the intended combatants were prohibited from approaching Perth without special licence. Troops were stationed to enforce this order, who did their charge so scrupulously, as to prevent Simon Glover himself, burgess and citizen of Perth, from approaching the town,

because he owned having come thither at the same time with the champions of Eachin MacIan, and wore a plaid around him of their check or pattern. This interruption prevented Simon from seeking out Henry Wynd, and possessing him with a true knowledge of all that had happened since their separation, which intercourse, had it taken place, must have materially altered the catastrophe of our narrative.

On Saturday afternoon another arrival took place which interested the city almost as much as the preparations for the expected combat. This was the approach of the Earl Douglas, who rode through the town with a troop of only thirty horse, but all of whom were knights and gentlemen of the first consequence. Men's eyes followed this dreaded peer as they pursue the flight of an eagle through the clouds, unable to ken the course of the bird of Jove, yet silent, attentive, and as earnest in observing him, as if they could guess the object for which he sweeps through the firmament. He rode slowly through the city, and passed out at the northern gate. He next alighted at the Dominican Convent, and desired to see the Duke of Albany. The Earl was introduced instantly, and received by the Duke with a manner which was meant to be graceful and conciliatory, but which could not conceal both art and inquietude. When the first greetings were over, the Earl said with great gravity, "I bring you melancholy news. Your Grace's royal Nephew, the Duke of Rothsay, is no more, and I fear hath perished by some foul practices."

"Practices!" said the Duke, in confusion, "what practices?—who dared practise on the heir of the Scottish throne?"

"'Tis not for me to state how these doubts arise," said Douglas; "but men say the eagle was killed with an arrow fledged from his own wing, and the oak trunk rent by a wedge of the same wood."

"Earl of Douglas," said the Duke of Albany, "I am no reader of riddles."

"Nor am I a propounder of them," said Douglas, haughtily. "Your Grace will find particulars in these papers worthy of perusal. I will go for half an hour to the cloister garden,* and then rejoin you."

"You go not to the King, my lord?" said Albany.

"No," answered Douglas; "I trust your Grace will agree with me that we should conceal this great family misfortune from our Sovereign till the business of to-morrow be decided."

"I willingly agree," said Albany. "If the King heard of this loss, he could not witness the combat; and if he appear not in person, these men are likely to refuse to fight, and the whole work is cast loose. But I pray you sit down, my lord, while I read these melancholy papers respecting poor Rothsay."

He passed the papers through his hands, turning some over with a hasty glance, and dwelling on others as if their contents had been of the last importance. When he had spent nearly a quarter of an

* Note XXI.—Gardens of the Dominican Convent.

hour in this manner, he raised his eyes, and said very gravely, "My lord, in these most melancholy documents, it is yet a comfort to see nothing which can renew the divisions in the King's councils, which were settled by the last solemn agreement between your lordship and myself. My unhappy nephew was by that agreement to be set aside, until Time should send him a graver judgment. He is now removed by Fate, and our purpose in that matter is anticipated and rendered unnecessary."

"If your Grace," replied the Earl, "sees nothing to disturb the good understanding which the tranquillity and safety of Scotland require should exist between us, I am not so ill a friend of my country as to look closely for such."

"I understand you, my Lord of Douglas," said Albany, eagerly. "You hastily judged that I should be offended with your lordship for exercising your powers of Lieutenancy, and punishing the detestable murderers within my territory of Falkland. Credit me, on the contrary, I am obliged to your lordship for taking out of my hands the punishment of these wretches, as it would have broken my heart even to have looked on them. The Scottish Parliament will enquire, doubtless, into this sacrilegious deed; and happy am I that the avenging sword has been in the hand of a man so important as your lordship. Our communication together, as your lordship must well recollect, bore only concerning a proposed restraint of my unfortunate nephew, until the advance of a year or two had taught him discretion?"

"Such was certainly your Grace's purpose, as expressed to me," said the Earl; "I can safely avouch it."

"Why, then, noble Earl, we cannot be censured, because villains, for their own revengeful ends, appear to have engrafted a bloody termination on our honest purpose?"

"The Parliament will judge it after their wisdom," said Douglas. "For my part, my conscience acquits me."

"And mine assoilzies *me*," said the Duke with solemnity. "Now, my lord, touching the custody of the boy James,* who succeeds to his father's claims of inheritance?"

"The King must decide it," said Douglas, impatient of the conference. "I will consent to his residence anywhere save at Stirling, Doune, or Falkland."

With that he left the apartment abruptly.

"He is gone," muttered the crafty Albany, "and he must be my ally—yet feels himself disposed to be my mortal foe. No matter—Rothsay sleeps with his fathers—James may follow in time, and then—a crown is the recompense of my perplexities."

* Second son of Robert III., brother of the unfortunate Duke of Rothsay, and afterwards King James I. of Scotland.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Thretty for thretty faucht in Barreris,
At Sanct Johnstoun on a day besyde the Black Freris."
Wyntoun.

PALM SUNDAY now dawned. At an earlier period of the Christian Church, the use of any of the days of Passion Week for the purpose of combat, would have been accounted a profanity worthy of excommunication. The Church of Rome, to her infinite honour, had decided, that during the holy season of Easter, when the redemption of man from his fallen state was accomplished, the sword of war should be sheathed, and angry monarchs should respect the season termed the Truce of God. The ferocious violence of the latter wars betwixt Scotland and England had destroyed all observance of this decent and religious ordinance. Very often the most solemn occasions were chosen by one party for an attack, because they hoped to find the other engaged in religious duties, and unprovided for defence. Thus the truce, once considered as proper to the season, had been discontinued; and it became not unusual even to select the sacred festivals of the Church for decision of the trial by combat, to which this intended contest bore a considerable resemblance.

On the present occasion, however, the duties of the day were observed with the usual solemnity, and the combatants themselves took share in them. Bearing branches of yew in their hands, as the readiest substitute for palm boughs, they marched respectively to the Dominican and Carthusian convents, to hear High Mass, and, by a show at least of devotion, to prepare themselves for the bloody strife of the day. Great care had of course been taken, that, during this

march, they should not even come within the sound of each other's bagpipes; for it was certain that, like game-cocks exchanging mutual notes of defiance, they would have sought out and attacked each other before they arrived at the place of combat.

The citizens of Perth crowded to see the unusual procession on the streets, and thronged the churches where the two clans attended their devotions, to witness their behaviour, and to form a judgment from their appearance which was most likely to obtain the advantage in the approaching conflict. Their demeanour in the church, although not habitual frequenters of places of devotion, was perfectly decorous; and, notwithstanding their wild and untamed dispositions, there were few of the mountaineers who seemed affected either with curiosity or wonder. They appeared to think it beneath their dignity of character to testify either curiosity or surprise at many things which were probably then presented to them for the first time.

On the issue of the combat, few even of the most competent judges dared venture a prediction; although the great size of Torquil and his eight stalwart sons, induced some who professed themselves judges of the thews and sinews of men, to incline to ascribe the advantage to the party of the Clan Quhele. The opinion of the female sex was much decided by the handsome form, noble countenance, and gallant demeanour of Eachin MacIan. There were more than one who imagined they had recollection of his features; but his splendid military attire rendered the humble Glover's apprentice unrecognisable in the young Highland Chief, saving by one person.

That person, as may well be supposed, was the Smith of the Wynd, who had been the foremost in the crowd that thronged to see the gallant champion of Clan Quhele. It was with mingled feelings of dislike, jealousy, and something approaching to admiration, that he saw the Glover's apprentice stripped of his mean slough, and blazing forth as a chieftain, who, by his quick eye and gallant demeanour, the noble shape of his brow and throat, his splendid arms and well-proportioned limbs, seemed well worthy to hold the foremost rank among men selected to live or die for the honour of their race. The Smith could hardly think that he looked upon the same passionate boy, whom he had brushed off as he might a wasp that stung him, and, in mere compassion, forebore to dispatch by treading on him.

"He looks it gallantly with my noble hauberk," thus muttered Henry to himself, "the best I ever wrought. Yet if he and I stood together where there was neither hand to help nor eye to see, by all that is blessed in this holy church, the good harness should return to its owner! All that I am worth would I give for three fair blows on his shoulders to undo my own best work; but such happiness will never be mine. If he escape from the conflict, it will be with so high a character for courage, that he may well disdain to put his fortune, in its freshness, to the risk of an encounter with a poor

burgess like myself. He will fight by his champion, and turn me over to my fellow-craftsman the Hammerer, when all I can reap will be the pleasure of knocking a Highland bullock on the head. If I could but see Simon Glover!—I will to the other church in quest of him, since for sure he must have come down from the Highlands."

The congregation was moving from the church of the Dominicans, when the Smith formed this determination, which he endeavoured to carry into speedy execution, by thrusting through the crowd as hastily as the solemnity of the place and occasion would permit. In making his way through the press, he was at one instant carried so close to Eachin that their eyes encountered. The Smith's hardy and embrowned countenance coloured up like the heated iron on which he wrought, and retained its dark-red hue for several minutes. Eachin's features glowed with a brighter blush of indignation, and a glance of fiery hatred was shot from his eyes. But the sudden flush died away in ashy paleness, and his gaze instantly avoided the unfriendly but steady look with which it was encountered.

Torquil, whose eye never quitted his foster-son, saw his emotion, and looked anxiously around to discover the cause. But Henry was already at a distance, and hastening on his way to the Carthusian convent. Here also the religious service of the day was ended; and those who had so lately borne palms in honour of the great event which brought peace on earth, and good-will to the children of men, were now streaming to the place of combat; some prepared to take the lives of their fellow-creatures, or to lose their own; others to view the deadly strife, with the savage delight which the heathens took in the contests of their gladiators.

The crowd was so great, that any other person might well have despaired of making way through it. But the general deference entertained for Henry of the Wynd, as the Champion of Perth, and the universal sense of his ability to force a passage, induced all to unite in yielding room for him, so that he was presently quite close to the warriors of the Clan Chattan. Their pipers marched at the head of their column. Next followed the well-known banner, displaying a mountain cat rampant, with the appropriate caution,—"Touch not the cat but (*i.e.* without) the glove." The Chief followed with his two-handed sword advanced, us if to protect the emblem of the tribe. He was a man of middle stature, more than fifty years old, but betraying, neither in features nor form, any decay of strength, or symptoms of age. His dark-red close-curled locks were in part chequered by a few grizzled hairs, but his step and gesture were as light in the dance, in the chase, or in the battle, as if he had not passed his thirtieth year. His grey eye gleamed with a wild light expressive of valour and ferocity mingled; but wisdom and experience dwelt on the expression of his forehead, eyebrows, and lips. The chosen champions followed by two and two. There was a cast

of anxiety on several of their faces, for they had that morning discovered the absence of one of their appointed number; and, in a contest so desperate as was expected, the loss seemed a matter of importance to all save to their high-mettled Chief, MacGillie Chattanach.

"Say nothing to the Saxons of his absence," said this bold leader, when the diminution of his force was reported to him. "The false Lowland tongues might say that one of Clan Chattan was a coward, and perhaps that the rest favoured his escape, in order to have a pretence to avoid the battle. I am sure that Ferquhard Day will be found in the ranks ere we are ready for battle; or, if he should not, am not I man enough for two of the Clan Quhele? or would we not fight them fifteen to thirty, rather than lose the renown that this day will bring us?"

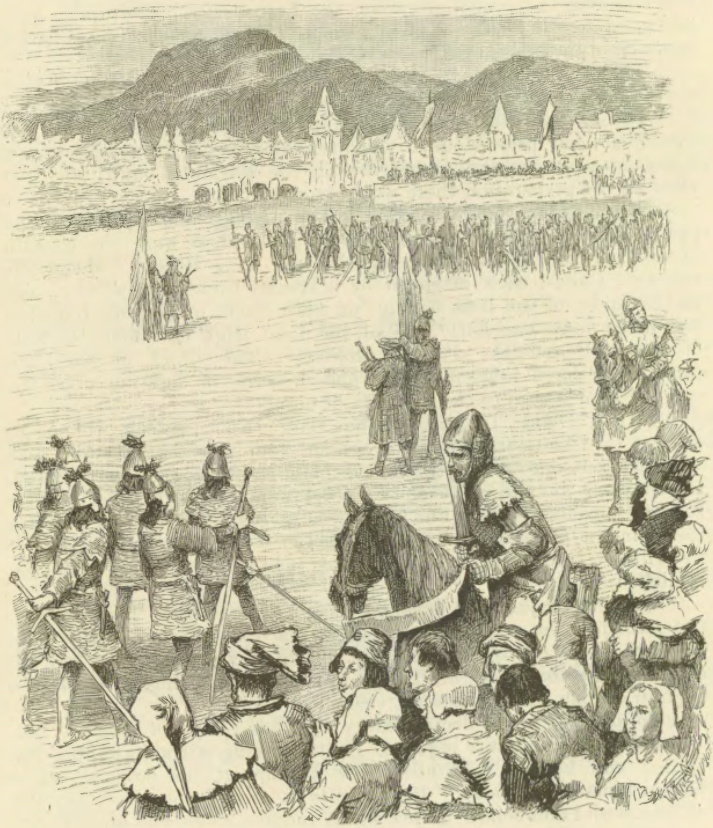
The tribe received the brave speech of their leader with applause, yet there were anxious looks thrown out in hopes of espying the return of the deserter; and perhaps the Chief himself was the only one of the determined band who was totally indifferent on the subject.

They marched on through the streets without seeing any thing of Ferquhard Day, who, many a mile beyond the mountains, was busied in receiving such indemnification as successful love could bestow for the loss of honour. MacGillie Chattanach marched on without seeming to observe the absence of the deserter, and entered upon the North Inch, a beautiful and level plain, closely adjacent to the city, and appropriated to the martial exercises of the inhabitants.

The plain is washed on one side by the deep and swelling Tay. There was erected within it a strong palisade, enclosing on three sides a space of one hundred and fifty yards in length, and seventy-four yards in width. The fourth side of the lists was considered as sufficiently fenced by the river. An amphitheatre for the accommodation of spectators surrounded the palisade, leaving a large space free to be occupied by armed men on foot and horse-back, and for the more ordinary class of spectators. At the extremity of the lists, which was nearest to the city, there was a range of elevated galleries for the King and his courtiers, so highly decorated with rustic treillage, intermingled with gilded ornaments, that the spot retains to this day the name of the Golden, or Gilded Arbour.

The mountain minstrelsy, which sounded the appropriate pibrochs or battle-tunes of the rival confederacies, was silent when they entered on the Inch, for such was the order which had been given. Two stately, but aged warriors, each bearing the banner of his tribe, advanced to the opposite extremities of the lists, and pitching their standards into the earth, prepared to be spectators of a fight in which they were not to join. The pipers, who were also to be neutral in the strife, took their places by their respective *brattachs*.

The multitude received both bands with the same general shout, with which on similar occasions they welcome those from whose exertion they expect amusement, or what they term sport. The



The proclamation of the heralds.

destined combatants returned no answer to this greeting, but each party advanced to the opposite extremities of the lists, where were entrances by which they were to be admitted to the interior. A strong body of men-at-arms guarded either access; and the Earl

Marshal at the one, and the Lord High Constable at the other, carefully examined each individual, to see whether he had the appropriate arms, being steel-cap, mail-shirt, two-handed sword, and dagger. They also examined the numbers of each party; and great was the alarm among the multitude, when the Earl of Errol held up his hand and cried,—"Ho! The combat cannot proceed, for the Clan Chattan lack one of their number."

"What reck of that?" said the young Earl of Crawford; "they should have counted better ere they left home."

The Earl Marshal, however, agreed with the Constable, that the fight could not proceed until the inequality should be removed; and a general apprehension was excited in the assembled multitude, that after all the preparation there would be no battle.

Of all present, there were only two perhaps who rejoiced at the prospect of the combat being adjourned; and these were, the Captain of the Clan Quhele, and the tender-hearted King Robert. Meanwhile the two Chiefs, each attended by a special friend and adviser, met in the midst of the lists, having, to assist them in determining what was to be done, the Earl Marshal, the Lord High Constable, the Earl of Crawford, and Sir Patrick Charteris. The Chief of the Clan Chattan declared himself willing and desirous of fighting upon the spot, without regard to the disparity of numbers.

"That," said Torquil of the Oak, "Clan Quhele will never consent to. You can never win honour from us with the sword, and you seek but a subterfuge, that you may say when you are defeated, as you know you will be, that it was for want of the number of your band fully counted out. But I make a proposal—Ferquhard Day was the youngest of your band, Eachin MacIan is the youngest of ours—we will set him aside in place of the man who has fled from the combat."

"A most unjust and unequal proposal," exclaimed Toshach Beg, the second, as he might be termed, of MacGillie Chattanach. "The life of the Chief is to the clan the breath of our nostrils, nor will we ever consent that our Chief shall be exposed to dangers which the Captain of Clan Quhele does not share."

Torquil saw with deep anxiety that his plan was about to fail, when the objection was made to Hector's being withdrawn from the battle; and he was meditating how to support his proposal, when Eachin himself interfered. His timidity, it must be observed, was not of that sordid and selfish nature which induces those who are infected by it calmly to submit to dishonour rather than risk danger. On the contrary, he was morally brave, though constitutionally timid, and the shame of avoiding the combat became at the moment more powerful than the fear of facing it.

"I will not hear," he said, "of a scheme which will leave my sword sheathed during this day's glorious combat. If I am young in

arms, there are enough of brave men around me, whom I may imitate if I cannot equal."

He spoke these words in a spirit which imposed on Torquil, and perhaps on the young Chief himself.

"Now, God bless his noble heart!" said the foster-father to himself. "I was sure the foul spell would be broken through, and that the tardy spirit which besieged him would fly at the sound of the pipe, and the first flutter of the Brattach!"

"Hear me, Lord Marshal," said the Constable. "The hour of combat may not be much longer postponed, for the day approaches to high noon. Let the Chief of Clan Chattan take the half hour which remains, to find, if he can, a substitute for this deserter; if he cannot, let them fight as they stand."

"Content I am," said the Marshal, "though, as none of his own clan are nearer than fifty miles, I see not how MacGillie Chattanach is to find an auxiliary."

"That is his business," said the High Constable; "but if he offers a high reward, there are enough of stout yeomen surrounding the lists, who will be glad enough to stretch their limbs in such a game as is expected. I myself, did my quality and charge permit, would blithely take a turn of work amongst these wild fellows, and think it fame won."

They communicated their decision to the Highlanders, and the Chief of the Clan Chattan replied,—"You have judged impartially and nobly, my lords, and I deem myself obliged to follow your direction. So make proclamation, heralds, that if any one will take his share with Clan Chattan of the honours and chances of this day, he shall have present payment of a gold crown, and liberty to fight to the death in my ranks."

"You are something chary of your treasure, Chief," said the Earl Marshal; "a gold crown is poor payment for such a campaign as is before you."

"If there be any man willing to fight for honour," replied MacGillie Chattanach, "the price will be enough; and I want not the service of a fellow who draws his sword for gold alone."

The heralds had made their progress, moving half way round the lists, stopping from time to time, to make proclamation as they had been directed, without the least apparent disposition on the part of any one to accept of the proffered enlistment. Some sneered at the poverty of the Highlanders, who set so mean a price upon such a desperate service. Others affected resentment, that they should esteem the blood of citizens so lightly. None showed the slightest intention to undertake the task proposed, until the sound of the proclamation reached Henry of the Wynd, as he stood without the barrier, speaking from time to time with Bailie Craigdallie, or rather listening vaguely to what the magistrate was saying to him.

"Ha! what proclaim they?" he cried out,

"A liberal offer on the part of MacGillie Chattanach," said the Host of the Griffin, "who proposes a gold crown to any one who will turn wild cat for the day, and be killed a little in his service! That's all."

"How!" exclaimed the Smith, eagerly, "do they make proclamation for a man to fight against the Clan Quhele?"

"Ay, marry do they," said the Griffin; "but I think they will find no such fools in Perth."

He had hardly said the word, when he beheld the Smith clear the barriers at a single bound, and alight in the lists, saying, "Here am I, Sir Herald, Henry of the Wynd, willing to do battle on the part of the Clan Chattan."

A cry of admiration ran through the multitude, while the grave burghers, not being able to conceive the slightest reason for Henry's behaviour, concluded that his head must be absolutely turned with the love of fighting. The Provost was especially shocked.

"Thou art mad," he said, "Henry! Thou hast neither two-handed sword nor shirt of mail."

"Truly no," said Henry, "for I parted with a mail-shirt, which I had made for myself, to yonder gay Chief of the Clan Quhele, who will soon find on his shoulders with what sort of blows I clink my rivets! As for two-handed sword, why this boy's brand will serve my turn till I can master a heavier one."

"This must not be," said Errol. "Hark thee, armourer, by St. Mary, thou shalt have my Milan hauberk and good Spanish sword."

"I thank your noble earlship, Sir Gilbert Hay; but the yoke with which your brave ancestor turned the battle at Loncarty, would serve my turn well enough. I am little used to sword or harness that I have not wrought myself, because I do not well know what blows the one will bear out without being cracked, or the other lay on without snapping."

The cry had in the meanwhile run through the multitude, and passed into the town, that the dauntless Smith was about to fight without armour, when, just as the fated hour was approaching, the shrill voice of a female was heard screaming for passage through the crowd. The multitude gave place to her importunity, and she advanced, breathless with haste, under the burden of a mail hauberk and a large, two-handed sword. The widow of Oliver Proudfute was soon recognised, and the arms which she bore were those of the Smith himself, which, occupied by her husband on the fatal evening when he was murdered, had been naturally conveyed to his house with the dead body, and were now, by the exertions of his grateful widow, brought to the lists at a moment when such proved weapons were of the last consequence to their owner. Henry joyfully received the well-known arms, and the widow with trembling haste assisted in putting them on, and then took

leave of him, saying, "God for the champion of the widow and orphan, and ill luck to all who come before him!"

Confident at feeling himself in his well-proved armour, Henry shook himself as if to settle the steel shirt around him, and, unsheathing the two-handed sword, made it flourish over his head, cutting the air through which it whistled in the form of the figure eight, with an ease and sleight of hand, that proved how powerfully and skilfully he could wield the ponderous weapon. The champions were now ordered to march in their turns around the lists, crossing so as to avoid meeting

The widow Proudfute brings Henry his armour.

each other, and making obeisance as they passed the Golden Arbour where the King was seated.

While this course was performing, most of the spectators were again curiously comparing the stature, limbs, and sinews of the two parties, and endeavouring to form a conjecture as to the probable issue of the combat. The feud of a hundred years, with all its acts of aggression and retaliation, was concentrated in the bosom of each combatant. Their countenances seemed fiercely writhen into the wildest expression of pride, hate, and a desperate purpose of fighting to the very last.

The spectators murmured a joyful applause, in high-wrought expectation of the bloody game. Wagers were offered and accepted

both on the general issue of the conflict, and on the feats of particular champions. The clear, frank, and elated look of Henry Smith, rendered him a general favourite among the spectators, and odds, to use the modern expression, were taken, that he would kill three of his opponents before he himself fell. Scarcely was the Smith equipped for the combat, when the commands of the Chiefs ordered the champions into their places; and at the same moment Henry heard the voice of Simon Glover issuing from the crowd, who were now silent with expectation, and calling on him, "Harry Smith, Harry Smith, what madness hath possessed thee?"

"Ay, he wishes to save his hopeful son-in-law, that is, or is to be, from the Smith's handling," was Henry's first thought—his second, was to turn and speak with him—and his third, that he could on no pretext desert the band which he had joined, or even seem desirous to delay the fight, consistently with honour.

He turned himself, therefore, to the business of the hour. Both parties were disposed by the respective Chiefs in three lines, each containing ten men. They were arranged with such intervals between each individual, as offered him scope to wield his sword, the blade of which was five feet long, not including the handle. The second and third lines were to come up as reserves, in case the first experienced disaster. On the right of the array of Clan Quhele, the Chief, Eachin MacIan, placed himself in the second line betwixt two of his foster-brothers. Four of them occupied the right of the first line, whilst the father and two others protected the rear of the beloved chieftain. Torquil, in particular, kept close behind, for the purpose of covering him. Thus Eachin stood in the centre of nine of the strongest men of his band, having four especial defenders in front, one on each hand, and three in his rear.

The line of the Clan Chattan was arranged in precisely the same order, only that the Chief occupied the centre of the middle rank, instead of being on the extreme right. This induced Henry Smith, who saw in the opposing bands only one enemy, and that was the unhappy Eachin, to propose placing himself on the left of the front rank of the Clan Chattan. But the leader disapproved of this arrangement; and having reminded Henry that he owed him obedience, as having taken wages at his hand, he commanded him to occupy the space in the third line, immediately behind himself,—a post of honour, certainly, which Henry could not decline, though he accepted of it with reluctance.

When the clans were thus drawn up opposed to each other, they intimated their feudal animosity, and their eagerness to engage, by a wild scream, which, uttered by the Clan Quhele, was answered and echoed back by the Clan Chattan, the whole at the same time shaking their swords, and menacing each other, as if they meant to conquer the imagination of their opponents ere they mingled in the actual strife.

At this trying moment, Torquil, who had never feared for himself, was agitated with alarm on the part of his Dault, yet consoled by observing that he kept a determined posture; and that the few words which he spoke to his clan were delivered boldly, and well calculated to animate them to combat, as expressing his resolution to partake their fate in death or victory. But there was no time for further observation. The trumpets of the King sounded a charge, the bagpipes blew up their screaming and maddening notes, and the combatants, starting forward in regular order, and increasing their pace till they came to a smart run, met together in the centre of the ground, as a furious land torrent encounters an advancing tide.

For an instant or two the front lines, hewing at each other with their long swords, seemed engaged in a succession of single combats; but the second and third ranks soon came up on either side, actuated alike by the eagerness of hatred and the thirst of honour, pressed through the intervals, and rendered the scene a tumultuous chaos, over which the huge swords rose and sunk, some still glittering, others streaming with blood, appearing, from the wild rapidity with which they were swayed, rather to be put in motion by some complicated machinery, than to be wielded by human hands. Some of the combatants, too much crowded together to use those long weapons, had already betaken themselves to their poniards, and endeavoured to get within the sword-sweep of those opposed to them. In the meantime, blood flowed fast, and the groans of those who fell began to mingle with the cries of those who fought; for, according to the manner of the Highlanders at all times, they could hardly be said to shout, but to yell. Those of the spectators whose eyes were best accustomed to such scenes of blood and confusion could, nevertheless, discover no advantage yet acquired by either party. The conflict swayed, indeed, at different intervals forwards or backwards, but it was only in momentary superiority, which the party who acquired it almost instantly lost by a corresponding exertion on the other side. The wild notes of the pipers were still heard above the tumult, and stimulated to further exertions the fury of the combatants.

At once, however, and as if by mutual agreement, the instruments sounded a retreat; it was expressed in wailing notes, which seemed to imply a dirge for the fallen. The two parties disengaged themselves from each other, to take breath for a few minutes. The eyes of the spectators greedily surveyed the shattered array of the combatants as they drew off from the contest, but found it still impossible to decide which had sustained the greater loss. It seemed as if the Clan Chattan had lost rather fewer men than their antagonists; but in compensation, the bloody plaids and shirts of their party (for several on both sides had thrown their mantles away) showed more wounded men than the Clan Quhele. About twenty of both sides lay on the field dead or dying; and arms and legs lopped off, heads cleft to the chin, slashes deep

through the shoulder into the breast, showed at once the fury of the combat, the ghastly character of the weapons used, and the fatal strength of the arms which wielded them. The Chief of the Clan Chattan had behaved himself with the most determined courage, and was slightly wounded. Eachin also had fought with spirit, surrounded by his body-guard. His sword was bloody; his bearing bold and warlike; and he smiled when old Torquil, folded him in his arms, loaded him with praises and with blessings.

The two Chiefs, after allowing their followers to breathe for the space of about ten minutes, again drew up in their files, diminished by nearly one-third of their original number. They now chose their ground nearer to the river than that on which they had formerly encountered, which was encumbered with the wounded and the slain. Some of the former were observed, from time to time, to raise themselves to gain a glimpse of the field, and sink back, most of them to die from the effusion of blood which poured from the terrific gashes inflicted by the claymore.

Harry Smith was easily distinguished by his Lowland habit, as well as his remaining on the spot where they had first encountered, where he leaning on a sword beside a corpse, whose bonneted head, carried to ten yards' distance from the body by the force of the blow which had swept it off, exhibited the oak-leaf, the appropriate ornament of the body-guard of Eachin MacIan. Since he slew this man, Henry had not struck a blow, but had contented himself with warding off many that were dealt at himself, and some which were aimed at the Chief. MacGillie Chattanach became alarmed, when, having given the signal that his men should again draw together, he observed that his powerful recruit remained at a distance from the ranks, and showed little disposition to join them.

"What ails thee, man?" said the Chief. "Can so strong a body have a mean and cowardly spirit? Come, and make into the combat."

"You as good as called me hireling but now," replied Henry. "If I am such," pointing to the headless corpse, "I have done enough for my day's wage."

"He that serves me without counting his hours," replied the Chief, "I reward him without reckoning wages."

"Then," said the Smith, "I fight as a volunteer, and in the post which best likes me."

"All that is at your own discretion," replied MacGillie Chattanach, who saw the prudence of humouring an auxiliary of such promise.

"It is enough," said Henry; and shouldering his heavy weapon, he joined the rest of the combatants with alacrity, and placed himself opposite to the Chief of the Clan Quhele.

It was then, for the first time, that Eachin showed some uncertainty. He had long looked up to Henry as the best combatant which Perth and its neighbourhood could bring into the lists. His

hatred to him as a rival was mingled with recollection of the ease with which he had once, though unarmed, foiled his own sudden and desperate attack; and when he beheld him with his eyes fixed in his direction, the dripping sword in his hand, and obviously meditating an attack on him individually, his courage fell, and he gave symptoms of wavering, which did not escape his foster-father.

It was lucky for Eachin, that Torquil was incapable, from the formation of his own temper, and that of those with whom he had lived, to conceive the idea of one of his own tribe, much less of his Chief and foster-son, being deficient in animal courage. Could he have imagined this, his grief and rage might have driven him to the fierce extremity of taking Eachin's life, to save him from staining his honour. But his mind rejected the idea that his Dault was a personal coward, as something which was monstrous and unnatural. That he was under the influence of enchantment, was a solution which superstition had suggested, and he now anxiously, but in a whisper, demanded of Hector, "Does the spell now darken thy spirit, Eachin?"

"Yes, wretch that I am," answered the unhappy youth; "and yonder stands the fell enchanter!"

"What!" exclaimed Torquil, "and you wear harness of his making? Norman, miserable boy, who brought you that accursed mail?"

"If my arrow has flown astray, I can but shoot my life after it," answered Norman-nan-Ord. "Stand firm, you shall see me break the spell."

"Yes, stand firm," said Torquil. "He may be a fell enchanter; but my own ear has heard, and my own tongue has told, that Eachin shall leave the battle whole, free, and unwounded—let us see the Saxon wizard who can gainsay that. He may be a strong man, but the fair forest of the oak shall fall, stock and bough, ere he lay a finger on my Dault. Ring around him, my sons,—*Bas air son Eachin!*"

The sons of Torquil shouted back the words, which signify, "Death for Hector!"

Encouraged by their devotion, Eachin renewed his spirit, and called boldly to the minstrels of his clan, "*Seid suas*"—that is, Strike up.

The wild pibroch again sounded the onset; but the two parties approached each other more slowly than at first, as men who knew and respected each other's valour. Henry Wynd, in his impatience to begin the contest, advanced before the Clan Chattan, and signed to Eachin to come on. Norman, however, sprang forward to cover his foster-brother, and their was a general, though momentary pause, as if both parties were willing to obtain an omen of the fate of the day, from the event of this duel. The Highlander advanced, with his large sword uplifted, as in act to strike; but just as he came within sword's length, he dropt the long and cumbrous weapon, leapt lightly over the Smith's sword, as he

fetched a cut at him, drew his dagger, and being thus within Henry's guard, struck him with the weapon (his own gift) on the side of the throat, directing the blow downwards into the chest, and calling aloud, at the same time, "You taught me the stab!"

But Henry Wynd wore his own good hauberk, doubly defended with a lining of tempered steel. Had he been less surely armed, his combats had been ended for ever. Even as it was, he was slightly wounded.

"Fool!" he replied, striking Norman a blow with the pommel of his long sword, which made him stagger backwards, "you were taught the thrust, but not the parry;" and fetching a blow at his antagonist, which cleft his skull through the steel-cap, he strode over the lifeless body to engage the young Chief, who now stood open before him.

But the sonorous voice of Torquil thundered out, "*Far eil air son Eachin!*" (Another for Hector!) and the two brethren who flanked their Chief on each side, thrust forward upon Henry, and, striking both at once, compelled him to keep the defensive.

"Forward, race of the Tiger Cat!" cried MacGillie Chattanach; "save the brave Saxon; let these kites feel your talons!"

Already much wounded, the Chief dragged himself up to the Smith's assistance, and cut down one of the *Leichtach*, by whom he was assailed. Henry's own good sword rid him of the other.

"*Reist air son Eachin!*" (Again for Hector!) shouted the faithful foster-father.

"*Bas air son Eachin!*" (Death for Hector!) answered two more of his devoted sons, and opposed themselves to the fury of the Smith and those who had come to his aid; while Eachin, moving towards the left wing of the battle, sought less formidable adversaries, and again, by some show of valour, revived the sinking hopes of his followers. The two children of the oak, who had covered this movement, shared the fate of their brethren; for the cry of the Clan Chattan Chief had drawn to that part of the field some of his bravest warriors. The sons of Torquil did not fall unavenged, but left dreadful marks of their swords on the persons of the dead and living. But the necessity of keeping their most distinguished soldiers around the person of their Chief told to disadvantage on the general event of the combat; and so few were now the number who remained fighting, that it was easy to see that the Clan Chattan had fifteen of their number left, though most of them wounded; and that of the Clan Quhele, only about ten remained, of whom there were four of the Chief's body-guard, including Torquil himself.

They fought and struggled on, however, and as their strength decayed, their fury seemed to increase. Henry Wynd, now wounded in many places, was still bent on breaking through, or exterminating, the band of bold hearts who continued to fight around the object of his animosity. But still the father's shout of, "Another for Hector!" was

cheerfully answered by the fatal countersign, "Death for Hector!" and though the Clan Quhele were now outnumbered, the combat seemed

The death of Tormot.

still dubious. It was bodily lassitude alone that again compelled them to another pause.

The Clan Chattan were then observed to be twelve in number, but two or three were scarce able to stand without leaning on their swords. Five were left of the Clan Quhele; Torquil and his youngest son were

of the number, both slightly wounded. Eachin alone had, from the vigilance used to intercept all blows levelled against his person, escaped without injury. The rage of both parties had sunk, through exhaustion, into sullen desperation. They walked staggering, as if in their sleep, through the carcasses of the slain, and gazed on them, as if again to animate their hatred towards their surviving enemies, by viewing the friends they had lost.

The multitude soon after beheld the survivors of the desperate conflict drawing together to renew the exterminating feud on the banks of the river, as the spot least slippery with blood, and less encumbered with the bodies of the slain.

"For God's sake—for the sake of the mercy which we daily pray for," said the kind-hearted old King, to the Duke of Albany, "let this be ended! Wherefore should these wretched rags and remnants of humanity be suffered to complete their butchery? Surely they will now be ruled, and accept of peace on moderate terms?"

"Compose yourself, my liege," said his brother. "These men are the pest of the Lowlands. Both Chiefs are still living—if they go back unharmed, the whole day's work is cast away. Remember your promise to the council, that you would not cry hold."

"You compel me to a great crime, Albany, both as a King, who should protect his subjects, and as a Christian man, who respects the brother of his faith."

"You judge wrong, my lord," said the Duke; "these are not loving subjects, but disobedient rebels, as my Lord of Crawford can bear witness; and they are still less Christian men, for the Prior of the Dominicans will vouch for me, that they are more than half heathen."

The King sighed deeply. "You must work your pleasure, and are too wise for me to contend with. I can but turn away, and shut my eyes from the sights and sounds of a carnage which makes me sicken. But well I know that God will punish me even for witnessing this waste of human life."

"Sound, trumpets," said Albany; "their wounds will stiffen if they dally longer."

While this was passing, Torquil was embracing and encouraging his young Chief.

"Resist the witchcraft but a few minutes longer! Be of good cheer—you will come off without either scar or scratch, wem or wound. Be of good cheer!"

"How can I be of good cheer," said Eachin, "while my brave kinsmen have one by one died at my feet?—died all for me, who could never deserve the least of their kindness!"

"And for what were they born, save to die for their Chief?" said Torquil, composedly. "Why lament that the arrow returns not to the quiver, providing it hit the mark? Cheer up yet—Here are Tormot and I but little hurt, while the wild-cats drag themselves through the

plain as if they were half throttled by the terriers—Yet one brave stand, and the day shall be your own, though it may well be that you alone remain alive. Minstrels, sound the gathering!"

The pipers on both sides blew their charge, and the combatants again mingled in battle, not indeed with the same strength, but with unabated inveteracy. They were joined by those whose duty it was to have remained neuter, but who now found themselves unable to do so. The two old champions who bore the standards, had gradually advanced from the extremity of the lists, and now approached close to the immediate scene of action. When they beheld the carnage more nearly they were mutually impelled by the desire to revenge their brethren, or not to survive them. They attacked each other furiously with the lances to which the standards were attached, closed after exchanging several deadly thrusts, then grappled in close strife, still holding their banners, until at length, in the eagerness of their conflict, they fell together into the Tay, and were found drowned after the combat, closely locked in each other's arms. The fury of battle, the frenzy of rage and despair, infected next the minstrels. The two pipers, who, during the conflict, had done their utmost to keep up the spirits of their brethren, now saw the dispute wellnigh terminated for want of men to support it. They threw down their instruments, rushed desperately upon each other with their daggers, and each being more intent on dispatching his opponent than in defending himself, the piper of Clan Quhele was almost instantly slain, and he of Clan Chattan mortally wounded. The last, nevertheless, again grasped his instrument, and the pibroch of the clan yet poured its expiring notes over the Clan Chattan, while the dying minstrel had breath to inspire it. The instrument which he used, or at least that part of it called the chanter, is preserved in the family of a Highland Chief to this day, and is much honoured under the name of the *Federan Dhu*, or Black Chanter.*

Meanwhile, in the final charge, young Tormot, devoted, like his brethren, by his father Torquil to the protection of his Chief, had been mortally wounded by the unsparing sword of the Smith. The other two remaining of the Clan Quhele had also fallen, and Torquil, with his foster-son, and the wounded Tormot, forced to retreat before eight or ten of the Clan Chattan, made a stand on the bank of the river, while their enemies were making such exertions as their wounds would permit to come up with them. Torquil had just reached the spot where he had resolved to make the stand, when the youth Tormot dropped and

* The present Cluny MacPherson, Chief of his Clan, is in possession of this ancient trophy of their presence at the North Inch. Another account of it is given by a tradition, which says, that an aerial minstrel appeared over the heads of the Clan Chattan, and having played some wild strains, let the instrument drop from his hand. Being made of glass, it was broken by the fall, excepting only the chanter, which, as usual, was of lignum vitæ. The MacPherson piper secured this enchanted pipe, and the possession of it is still considered as ensuring the prosperity of the clan.

expired. His death drew from his father the first and only sigh which he had breathed throughout the eventful day.

"My son Tormot!" he said, "my youngest and dearest! But if I save Hector, I save all. Now, my darling Dault, I have done for thee all that man may, excepting the last. Let me undo the clasps of that ill-omened armour, and do thou put on that of Tormot; it is light, and will fit thee well. While you do so, I will rush on these crippled men, and make what play with them I can. I trust I shall have but little to do, for they are following each other like disabled steers. At least, darling of my soul, if I am unable to save thee, I can show thee how a man should die."

While Torquil thus spoke, he unloosed the clasps of the young Chief's hauberk, in the simple belief that he could thus break the meshes which fear and necromancy had twined about his heart.

"My father, my father, my more than parent!" said the unhappy Eachin—"Stay with me!—with you by my side, I feel I can fight to the last."

"It is impossible," said Torquil. "I will stop them coming up, while you put on the hauberk. God eternally bless thee, beloved of my soul!"

And then, brandishing his sword, Torquil of the Oak rushed forward with the same fatal war-cry, which had so often sounded over that bloody field, *Bas air son Eachin!*—The words rung three times in a voice of thunder; and each time that he cried his war-shout, he struck down one of the Clan Chattan, as he met them successively straggling towards him.—"Brave battle, hawk—well flown, falcon!" exclaimed the multitude, as they witnessed exertions which seemed, even at this last hour, to threaten a change of the fortunes of the day. Suddenly these cries were hushed into silence, and succeeded by a clashing of swords so dreadful, as if the whole conflict had recommenced in the person of Henry Wynd and Torquil of the Oak. They cut, foined, hewed and thrust, as if they had drawn their blades for the first time that day; and their inveteracy was mutual, for Torquil recognized the foul wizard, who, as he supposed, had cast a spell over his child; and Henry saw before him the giant, who, during the whole conflict, had interrupted the purpose for which alone he had joined the combatants—that of engaging in single combat with Hector. They fought with an equality which, perhaps, would not have existed, had not Henry, more wounded than his antagonist, been somewhat deprived of his usual agility.

Meanwhile Eachin, finding himself alone, after a disorderly and vain attempt to put on his foster-brother's harness, became animated by an emotion of shame and despair, and hurried forward to support his foster-father in the terrible struggle, ere some other of the Clan Chattan should come up. When he was within five yards, and sternly determined to take his share in the death-fight, his foster-father fell,

Death of Torquil of the Oak, and Eachin's flight.

cleft from the collar-bone wellnigh to the heart, and murmuring with his last breath, *Bas air son Eachin!*—The unfortunate youth saw the fall of his last friend, and at the same moment beheld the deadly enemy who had hunted him through the whole field, standing within sword's point of him, and brandishing the huge weapon which had hewed its way to his life through so many obstacles. Perhaps this was enough to bring his constitutional timidity to its highest point; or perhaps he recollected at the same moment that he was without defensive armour, and that a line of enemies, halting indeed and crippled, but eager for revenge and blood, were closely approaching. It is enough to say, that his heart sickened, his eyes darkened, his ears tingled, his brain turned giddy—all other considerations were lost in the apprehension of instant death; and drawing one ineffectual blow at the Smith, he avoided that which was aimed at him in return, by bounding backward; and ere the former could recover his weapon, Eachin had plunged into the stream of the Tay. A roar of contumely pursued him as he swam across the river, although, perhaps, not a dozen of those who joined in it would have behaved otherwise in the like circumstances. Henry looked after the fugitive in silence and surprise, but could not speculate on the consequences of his flight, on account of the faintness which seemed to overpower him as soon as the animation of the contest had subsided. He sat down on the grassy bank, and endeavoured to stanch such of his wounds as were pouring fastest.

The victors had the general meed of gratulation. The Duke of Albany and others went down to survey the field; and Henry Wynd was honoured with particular notice.

"If thou wilt follow me, good fellow," said the Black Douglas, "I will change thy leathern apron for a knight's girdle, and thy burgage tenement for an hundred-pound-land to maintain thy rank withal."

"I thank you humbly, my lord," said the Smith, dejectedly, "but I have shed blood enough already; and Heaven has punished me, by foiling the only purpose for which I entered the combat."

"How, friend? said Douglas. "Didst thou not fight for the Clan Chattan, and have they not gained a glorious conquest?"

"*I fought for my own hand,*" said the Smith, indifferently; and the expression is still proverbial in Scotland.*

The good King Robert now came up on an ambling palfrey, having entered the barriers for the purpose of causing the wounded to be looked after.

"My Lord of Douglas," he said, "you vex the poor man with temporal matters, when it seems he may have short time to consider those that are spiritual. Has he no friends here who will bear him where his bodily wounds, and the health of his soul, may be both cared for?"

* Meaning, I did such a thing for my own pleasure, not for your profit.

"He hath as many friends as there are good men in Perth," said Sir Patrick Charteris; "and I esteem myself one of the closest."

"A churl will savour of churl's kind," said the haughty Douglas, turning his horse aside; "the proffer of knighthood from the sword of Douglas had recalled him from death's door, had there been a drop of gentle blood in his body."

Disregarding the taunt of the mighty Earl, the Knight of Kinfauns dismounted to take Henry in his arms, as he now sank back from very faintness. But he was prevented by Simon Glover, who, with other burgesses of consideration, had now entered the barrace.

"Henry, my beloved son Henry!" said the old man. "O! what tempted you to this fatal affray?—Dying—speechless?"

"No—not speechless," said Henry. "Catharine——"

He could utter no more.

"Catharine is well, I trust; and shall be thine—that is, if——"

"If she be safe, thou wouldst say, old man," said the Douglas, who, though something affronted at Henry's rejection of his offer, was too magnanimous not to interest himself in what was passing. "She is safe, if Douglas's banner can protect her—safe, and shall be rich. Douglas can give wealth to those who value it more than honour."

"For her safety, my lord, let the heartfelt thanks and blessings of a father go with the noble Douglas. For wealth, we are rich enough—Gold cannot restore my beloved son."

"A marvel!" said the Earl,—"a churl refuses nobility—a citizen despises gold!"

"Under your lordship's favour," said Sir Patrick, "I, who am knight and noble, take licence to say, that such a brave man as Henry Wynd may reject honourable titles—such an honest man as this reverend citizen may dispense with gold."

"You do well, Sir Patrick, to speak for your town, and I take no offence," said the Douglas. "I force my bounty on no one. But," he added, in a whisper to Albany, "your Grace must withdraw the King from this bloody sight, for he must know *that* to-night which will ring over broad Scotland when to-morrow dawns. This feud is ended. Yet even *I* grieve that so many brave Scottish men lie here slain, whose brands might have decided a pitched field in their country's cause."

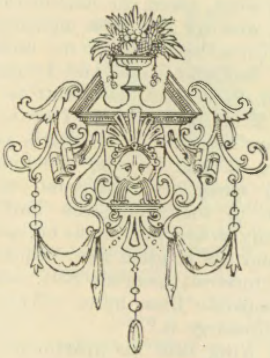
With difficulty King Robert was withdrawn from the field; the tears running down his aged cheeks and white beard, as he conjured all around him, nobles and priests, that care should be taken for the bodies and souls of the few wounded survivors, and honourable burial rendered to the slain. The priests who were present answered zealously for both services, and redeemed their pledge faithfully and piously.

Thus ended this celebrated conflict of the North Inch of Perth. Of sixty-four brave men (the minstrels and standard-bearers included) who strode manfully to the fatal field, seven alone survived, who were conveyed from thence in litters, in a case little different from the dead

and dying around them, and mingled with them in the sad procession which conveyed them from the scene of their strife. Eachin alone had left it void of wounds, and void of honour.

It remains but to say, that not a man of the Clan Quhele survived the bloody combat, except the fugitive Chief; and the consequence of the defeat was the dissolution of their confederacy. The clans of which it consisted are now only matter of conjecture to the antiquary, for, after this eventful contest, they never assembled under the same banner. The Clan Chattan, on the other hand, continued to increase and flourish; and the best families of the Northern Highlands boast their descent from the race of the Cat-a-Mountain.*

* Note XXII.



CHAPTER XXXV.

WHILE the King rode slowly back to the convent which he then occupied, Albany, with a discomposed aspect and faltering voice, asked the Earl of Douglas, "Will not your lordship, who saw this most melancholy scene at Falkland, communicate the tidings to my unhappy brother?"

"Not for broad Scotland," said the Douglas. "I would sooner bare my breast, within flight-shot, as a butt to an hundred Tynedale bowmen. No, by St. Bride of Douglas! I could but say I saw the ill-fated youth dead. How he came by his death, your Grace can perhaps better explain. Were it not for the rebellion of March, and the English war, I would speak my own mind of it." So saying, and making his obeisance to the King, the Earl rode off to his own lodgings, leaving Albany to tell his tale as he best could.

"The rebellion and the English war?" said the Duke to himself,—"Ay, and thine own interest, haughty Earl, which, imperious as thou art, thou darest not separate from mine. Well, since the task falls on me, I must and will discharge it."

He followed the King into his apartment. The King looked at him with surprise after he had assumed his usual seat.

"Thy countenance is ghastly, Robin," said the King. "I would thou wouldst think more deeply when blood is to be spilled, since its consequences affect thee so powerfully. And yet, Robin, I love thee the better that thy kind nature will sometimes show itself, even through thy reflecting policy."

"I would to Heaven, my royal brother," said Albany, with a voice half choked, "that the bloody field we have seen were the worst we had to see or hear of this day. I should waste little sorrow on the wild kerne who lie piled on it like carrion. But——" he paused.

"How!" exclaimed the King, in terror,—"What new evil?—Rothsay?—It must be—it is Rothsay! Speak out!—What new folly has been done? What fresh mischance?"

"My lord—my liege—folly and mischance are now ended with my hapless nephew."

"He is dead!—he is dead!" screamed the agonized parent. "Albany, as thy brother, I conjure thee—— But no—I am thy brother no longer! As thy King, dark and subtle man, I charge thee to tell the worst!"

Albany faltered out,—"The details are but imperfectly known to me; but the certainty is, that my unhappy nephew was found dead in his apartment last night from sudden illness—as I have heard."

"O, Rothsay!—O, my beloved David!—Would to God I had died for thee, my son—my son!"

So spoke, in the emphatic words of Scripture, the helpless and bereft father, tearing his grey beard and hoary hair, while Albany, speechless and conscience-struck, did not venture to interrupt the tempest of his grief. But the agony of the King's sorrow almost instantly changed to fury—a mood so contrary to the gentleness and timidity of his nature, that the remorse of Albany was drowned in his fear.

"And this is the end," said the King, "of thy moral saws and religious maxims! But the besotted father, who gave the son into thy hands, who gave the innocent lamb to the butcher, is a King! and thou shalt know it to thy cost. Shall the murderer stand in presence of his brother—stained with the blood of that brother's son? No! What ho, without there! MacLouis! Brandanes! Treachery! Murder! Take arms, if you love the Stewart!"

MacLouis, with several of the guards, rushed into the apartment.

"Murder and treason!" exclaimed the miserable King. "Brandanes—your noble Prince——" here his grief and agitation interrupted for a moment the fatal information it was his object to convey. At length he resumed his broken speech,—"An axe and a block instantly into the court-yard!—Arrest——" The word choked his utterance.

"Arrest whom, my noble liege?" said MacLouis, who, observing the King influenced by a tide of passion so different from the gentleness of his ordinary demeanour, almost conjectured that his brain had been disturbed by the unusual horrors of the combat he had witnessed,—"Whom shall I arrest, my liege?" he replied. "Here is none but your Grace's royal brother of Albany."

"Most true," said the King, his brief fit of vindictive passion soon dying way. "Most true—none but Albany—none but my parents' child—none but my brother. O God! enable me to quell the sinful passion which glows in this bosom—*Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!*"

MacLouis cast a look of wonder towards the Duke of Albany, who

endeavoured to hide his confusion under an affectation of deep sympathy, and muttered to the officer,—

"The great misfortune has been too much for his understanding."

"What misfortune, please your Grace?" replied MacLouis. "I have heard of none."

"How!—not heard of the death of my nephew Rothsay?"

"The Duke of Rothsay dead, my Lord of Albany!" exclaimed the faithful Brandane, with the utmost horror and astonishment. "When, how, and where?"

"Two days since—the manner as yet unknown—at Falkland."

MacLouis gazed at the Duke for an instant; then, with a kindling eye and determined look, said to the King, who seemed deeply engaged in his mental devotion,—"My liege! a minute or two since you left a word—one word—unspoken. Let it pass your lips, and your pleasure is law to your Brandanes!"

"I was praying against temptation, MacLouis," said the heart-broken King, "and you bring it to me. Would you arm a madman with a drawn weapon? But oh, Albany! my friend, my brother, my bosom counsellor!—how—how camest thou by the heart to do this!"

Albany, seeing that the King's mood was softening, replied with more firmness than before, "My castle has no barrier against the power of death—I have not deserved the foul suspicions which your Majesty's words imply. I pardon them, from the distraction of a bereaved father. But I am willing to swear by cross and altar—by my share in salvation, by the souls of our royal parents——"

"Be silent, Robert!" said the King; "add not perjury to murder. And was this all done to gain a step nearer to a crown and sceptre? Take them to thee at once, man; and mayst thou feel as I have done, that they are both of red-hot iron! O Rothsay, Rothsay! thou hast at least escaped being a king!"

"My liege," said MacLouis, "let me remind you, that the crown and sceptre of Scotland are, when your Majesty ceases to bear them, the right of Prince James, who succeeds to his brother's rights."

"True, MacLouis," said the King, eagerly, "and will succeed, poor child, to his brother's perils! Thanks, MacLouis, thanks. You have reminded me that I have still work upon earth. Get thy Brandanes under arms with what speed thou canst. Let no man go with us whose truth is not known to thee. None in especial who has trafficked with the Duke of Albany—that man, I mean, who calls himself my brother!—and order my litter to be instantly prepared. We will to Dunbarton, MacLouis, or to Bute. Precipices, and tides, and my Brandanes' hearts, shall defend the child till we can put oceans betwixt him and his cruel uncle's ambition. Farewell, Robert of Albany—farewell for ever, thou hard-hearted, bloody man! Enjoy such share of power as the Douglas may permit thee. But seek not to see my face again, far less to approach my remaining child! for, that hour thou

dost, my guards shall have orders to stab thee down with their artisans!—MacLouis, look it be so directed."

The Duke of Albany left the presence without attempting further justification or reply.

The King's grief at the death of the Duke of Rothsay.

What followed is matter of history. In the ensuing Parliament the Duke of Albany prevailed on that body to declare him innocent of the death of Rothsay, while, at the same time, he showed his own sense

of guilt by taking out a remission or pardon for the offence. The unhappy and aged monarch secluded himself in his Castle of Rothsay, in Bute, to mourn over the son he had lost, and watch with feverish anxiety over the life of him who remained. As the best step for the youthful James's security, he sent him to France to receive his education at the court of the reigning sovereign. But the vessel in which the Prince of Scotland sailed, was taken by an English cruiser, and although there was a truce for the moment betwixt the kingdoms, Henry IV. ungenerously detained him a prisoner. This last blow completely broke the heart of the unhappy King Robert III. Vengeance followed, though with a slow pace, the treachery and cruelty of his brother. Robert of Albany's own grey hairs went, indeed, in peace to the grave, and he transferred the regency which he had so foully acquired, to his son Murdoch. But nineteen years after the death of the old King, James I. returned to Scotland, and Duke Murdoch of Albany, with his sons, was brought to the scaffold, in expiation of his father's guilt and his own.*

* Note XXIII.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"The honest heart that's free frae a'
Intended fraud or guile,
However Fortune kick the ba',
Has aye some cause to smile."

BURNS.

WE now return to the Fair Maid of Perth, who had been sent from the horrible scene at Falkland, by order of the Douglas, to be placed under the protection of his daughter the now widowed Duchess of Rothsay. That lady's temporary residence was a religious house called Campsie, the ruins of which still occupy a striking situation on the Tay. It arose on the summit of a precipitous rock, which descends on the princely river, there rendered peculiarly remarkable by the cataract called Campsie Linn, where its waters rush tumultuously over a range of basaltic rock, which intercepts the current, like a dike erected by human hands. Delighted with a site so romantic, the monks of the Abbey of Cupar reared a structure there, dedicated to an obscure Saint, named St. Hunnand, and hither they were wont themselves to retire for pleasure or devotion. It had readily opened its gates to admit the noble lady who was its present inmate, as the country was under the influence of the powerful Lord Drummond, the ally of the Douglas. There the Earl's letters were presented to the Duchess by the leader of the escort which conducted Catharine and the glee-maiden to Campsie. Whatever reason she might have to complain of Rothsay, his horrible and unexpected end greatly shocked the noble lady, and she spent the greater part of the night in indulging her grief, and in devotional exercises.

On the next morning, which was that of the memorable Palm

Sunday, she ordered Catharine Glover and the minstrel into her presence. The spirits of both the young women had been much sunk and shaken by the dreadful scenes in which they had so lately been engaged; and the outward appearance of the Duchess Marjory was, like that of her father, more calculated to inspire awe than confidence. She spoke with kindness, however, though apparently in deep affliction, and learned from them all which they had to tell concerning the fate of her erring and inconsiderate husband. She appeared grateful for the efforts which Catharine and the glee-maiden had made, at their own extreme peril, to save Rothsay from his horrible fate. She invited them to join in her devotions; and at the hour of dinner gave them her hand to kiss, and dismissed them to their own refection, assuring both, and Catharine in particular, of her efficient protection, which should include, she said, her father's, and be a wall around them both, so long as she herself lived.

They retired from the presence of the widowed Princess, and partook of a repast with her duennas and ladies, all of whom, amid their profound sorrow, showed a character of stateliness, which chilled the light heart of the Frenchwoman, and imposed restraint even on the more serious character of Catharine Glover. The friends, for so we may now term them, were fain, therefore, to escape from the society of these persons, all of them born gentlewomen, who thought themselves but ill-assorted with a burgher's daughter and a strolling glee-maiden, and saw them with pleasure go out to walk in the neighbourhood of the convent. A little garden, with its bushes and fruit-trees, advanced on one side of the convent, so as to skirt the precipice, from which it was only separated by a parapet built on the ledge of the rock, so low that the eye might easily measure the depth of the crag, and gaze on the conflicting waters which foamed, struggled, and chafed over the reef below.

The Fair Maiden of Perth and her companion walked slowly on a path that ran within this parapet, looked at the romantic prospect, and judged what it must be when the advancing summer should clothe the grove with leaves. They observed for some time a deep silence. At length the gay and bold spirit of the glee-maiden rose above the circumstances in which she had been and was now placed.

"Do the horrors of Falkland, fair May, still weigh down your spirits? Strive to forget them as I do; we cannot tread life's path lightly, if we shake not from our mantles the rain-drops as they fall."

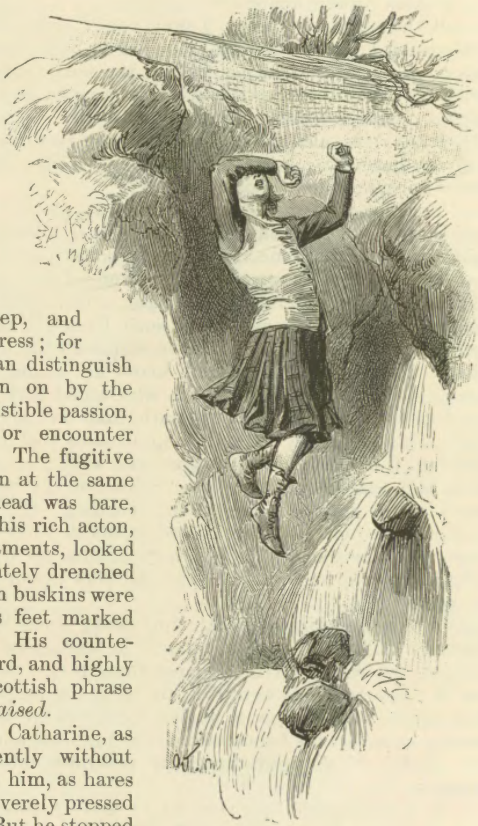
"These horrors are not to be forgotten," answered Catharine. "Yet my mind is at present anxious respecting my father's safety; and I cannot but think how many brave men may be at this instant leaving the world, even within six miles of us, or little farther."

"You mean the combat betwixt sixty champions, of which the Douglas's equerry told us yesterday? It were a sight for a minstrel to witness. But out upon these womanish eyes of mine! they could

never see swords cross each other, without being dazzled. But see,—look yonder, May Catharine, look yonder! That flying messenger certainly brings news of the battle."

"Methinks I should know him who runs so wildly," said Catharine. "But if it be he I think of, some wild thoughts are urging his speed."

As she spoke, the runner directed his course to the garden. Louise's little dog ran to meet him, barking furiously, but came back, to cower, creep, and growl behind its mistress; for even dumb animals can distinguish when men are driven on by the furious energy of irresistible passion, and dread to cross or encounter them in their career. The fugitive rushed into the garden at the same reckless pace. His head was bare, his hair dishevelled; his rich acton, and all his other vestments, looked as if they had been lately drenched in water. His leathern buskins were cut and torn, and his feet marked the sod with blood. His countenance was wild, haggard, and highly excited, or, as the Scottish phrase expressed it, much *raised*.



Eachin's suicide.

"Conachar!" said Catharine, as he advanced, apparently without seeing what was before him, as hares are said to do when severely pressed by the greyhounds. But he stopped short when he heard his own name.

"Conachar," said Catharine, "or rather Eachin MacIan—what means all this? Have the Clan Quhele sustained a defeat?"

"I *have* borne such names as this maiden gives me," said the fugitive, after a moment's recollection. "Yes, I was called Conachar when I was happy, and Eachin when I was powerful. But now I have

no name, and there is no such clan as thou speak'st of; and thou art a foolish maid to speak of that which is not, to one who has no existence."

"Alas! unfortunate——"

"And why unfortunate, I pray you?" exclaimed the youth. "If I am coward and villain, have not villainy and cowardice command over the elements? Have I not braved the water without its choking me, and trod the firm earth without its opening to devour me? And shall a mortal oppose my purpose?"

"He raves, alas!" said Catharine. "Haste to call some help, He will not harm me; but I fear he will do evil to himself. See how he stares down on the roaring waterfall!"

The glee-woman hastened to do as she was ordered; and Conachar's half-frenzied spirit seemed relieved by her absence. "Catharine," he said, "now she is gone, I will say I know thee—I know thy love of peace and hatred of war. But hearken—I have, rather than strike a blow at my enemy, given up all that a man calls dearest—I have lost honour, fame, and friends; and such friends!" (he placed his hands before his face)—"Oh! their love surpassed the love of woman! Why should I hide my tears? All know my shame—all should see my sorrow. Yes, all might see, but who would pity it? Catharine, as I ran like a madman down the strath, man and woman called shame on me! The beggar to whom I flung an alms that I might purchase one blessing, threw it back in disgust, and with a curse upon the coward! Each bell that tolled rung out, 'Shame on the recreant caitiff!' The brute beasts in their lowing and bleating—the wild winds in their rustling and howling—the hoarse waters in their dash and roar, cried, 'Out upon the dustard!' The faithful nine are still pursuing me; they cry with feeble voice, 'Strike but one blow in our revenge; we all died for you!'"

While the unhappy youth thus raved, a rustling was heard in the bushes. "There is but one way!" he exclaimed, springing upon the parapet, but with a terrified glance towards the thicket, through which one or two attendants were stealing, with the purpose of surprising him. But the instant he saw a human form emerge from the cover of the bushes, he waved his hands wildly over his head, and shrieking out, "*Bas air Eachin!*" plunged down the precipice into the raging cataract beneath.

It is needless to say, that aught save thistledown must have been dashed to pieces in such a fall. But the river was swelled, and the remains of the unhappy youth were never seen. A varying tradition has assigned more than one supplement to the history. It is said by one account, that the young Captain of Clan Quhele swam safe to shore, far below the Linns of Campsie; and that, wandering disconsolately in the deserts of Rannoch, he met with Father Clement, who had taken up his abode in the wilderness as a hermit, on the principle of the old

Culdees. He converted, it is said, the heart-broken and penitent Conachar, who lived with him in his cell, sharing his devotion and privation, till death removed them in succession.

Another wilder legend supposes that he was snatched from death by the *Daione-Shie*, or fairy-folk; and that he continues to wander through wood and wild, armed like an ancient Highlander, but carrying his sword in his left hand. The phantom appears always in deep grief. Sometimes he seems about to attack the traveller, but, when resisted with courage, always flies. These legends are founded on two peculiar points in his story—his evincing timidity, and his committing suicide; both of them circumstances almost unexampled in the history of a Mountain Chief.

When Simon Glover, having seen his friend Henry duly taken care of in his own house in Curfew Street, arrived that evening at the Place of Campsie, he found his daughter extremely ill of a fever, in consequence of the scenes to which she had lately been a witness, and particularly the catastrophe of her late playmate. The affection of the glee-maiden rendered her so attentive and careful a nurse that the Glover said it should not be his fault if she ever touched lute again, save for her own amusement.

It was some time ere Simon ventured to tell his daughter of Henry's late exploits, and his severe wounds; and he took care to make the most of the encouraging circumstance that her faithful lover had refused both honour and wealth rather than become a professed soldier, and follow the Douglas. Catharine sighed deeply, and shook her head at the history of bloody Palm Sunday on the North Inch. But apparently she had reflected that men rarely advance in civilization or refinement beyond the ideas of their own age, and that a headlong and exuberant courage, like that of Henry Smith, was, in the iron days in which they lived, preferable to the deficiency which had led to Conachar's catastrophe. If she had any doubts on the subject, they were removed in due time by Henry's protestations, so soon as restored health enabled him to plead his own cause.

"I should blush to say, Catharine, that I am even sick of the thoughts of doing battle. Yonder last field showed carnage enough to glut a tiger. I am therefore resolved to hang up my broadsword, never to be drawn more unless against the enemies of Scotland."

"And should Scotland call for it," said Catharine, "I will buckle it round you."

"And, Catharine," said the joyful Glover, "we will pay largely for soul masses for those who have fallen by Henry's sword; and that will not only cure spiritual flaws, but make us friends with the Church again."

"For that purpose, father," said Catharine, "the hoards of the wretched Dwining may be applied. He bequeathed them to me, but I think you would not mix his base blood-money with your honest gains!"

"I would bring the plague into my house as soon," said the resolute Glover.

The treasures of the wicked apothecary were distributed accordingly among the four monasteries; nor was there ever after a breath of suspicion concerning the orthodoxy of old Simon or his daughter.

Henry and Catharine were married within four months after the battle of the North Inch, and never did the corporations of the glovers and hammermen trip their sword-dance so featly as at the wedding of the boldest burgess and brightest maiden in Perth. Ten months after, a gallant infant filled the well-spread cradle, and was rocked by Louise, to the tune of

Bold and True,
In bonnet blue.

The names of the boy's sponsors are recorded, as "Ane Hie and Michty Lord, Archibald Erl of Douglas, ane Honorabil and gude Knicht, Schir Patrick Charteris of Kinfauns, and ane Gracious Princess, Marjory Dowaire of his Serene Highness David, umquhile Duke of Rothsay." Under such patronage a family rises fast; and several of the most respected houses in Scotland, but especially in Perthshire, and many individuals, distinguished both in arts and arms, record with pride their descent from the *Gow Chrom* and the *Fair Maid of Perth.*

NOTES.

Note I., p. 4.—View from the Wicks of Baiglie.

The following note is supplied by a distinguished local antiquary.

"The modern method of conducting the highways through the valleys and along the bases, instead of over the tops of the mountains, as in the days when Chrystal Croftangry travelled, has deprived the stranger of two very striking points of view on the road from Edinburgh to Perth. The first of these presented itself at the summit of one of the Ochills; and the second, which was, in fact, but a nearer view of a portion of the first, was enjoyed on attaining the western shoulder of the hill of Moredun, or Moncreiff. This view from Moncreiff (that which, it is said, made the Romans exclaim that they had found another field of Mars on the bank of another Tiber) now open to the traveller in a less abrupt and striking manner than formerly, but it still retains many of those features which Pennant has so warmly eulogized. The view from the Ochills has been less fortunate, for the road here winds through a narrow but romantic valley amongst these eminences, and the passing stranger is ushered into Strathern, without an opportunity being offered to him of surveying the magnificent scene which in days of no ancient date every traveller from the South had spread out before him at the Wicks of Baiglie.

"But in seeking out this spot—and it will repay the toil of the ascent a thousandfold—the admirer of such scenes should not confine his researches to the Wicks of Baiglie, strictly so called, but extend them westward until he gain the old road from Kinross to the Church of Drone, being that by which Mr. Croftangry must have journeyed. The point cannot be mistaken; it is the only one from which Perth itself is visible. To this station, for reasons that the critic will duly appreciate, might with great propriety be applied the language of one of the guides at Dunkeld, on reaching a bold projecting rock on Craig Vinean—'Ah, sirs, this is the *decisive point!*'"

The pencil of Mr. D. O. Hill has been employed to give this celebrated view from the Wicks of Baiglie, as one of the illustrations of this volume.

Note II., p. 5.

David II., after the death of his Queen Jane, married his mistress, "ane lusty woman, Catharine Logie," and though he soon repented, and would fain have repudiated her, the Pope interesting himself in her favour, he found himself bound. As to the next generation, Boece tells us that, "After King Robert (II.) marryit the Earl of Rossis dochter, he had Elizabeth Mure (of Rowallan) in place of his wife. In the thrid year of King Robert, deceasit Euphame his Queen; and he incontinent marryit Elizabeth, lemman afore rehearsit, for the affection that he had to her bairnis."—Bellenden, vol. i. p. 452.

Robert III. himself was a son of Elizabeth Mure.

Note III., p. 21.—Robert Bruce.

The story of Bruce, when in sore straits, watching a spider near his bed, as it made repeated unsuccessful efforts to attach its thread, but, still persevering, at last attained the object, and drawing from this an augury which encouraged him to proceed in spite of fortune's hard usage, is familiar to the reader of Barbour. It was ever after held a foul crime in any of the name of Bruce, or inheriting Gentle King Robert's blood, to injure an insect of this tribe; but indeed it is well known that compassion towards the weak formed part of his character through life; and the beautiful incident of his stopping his army when on the march in circumstances of pressing difficulty in the Ulster campaign, because a poor *lavendere* (washer-woman) was taken with the pains of childbirth, and must have been left, had he proceeded, to the mercy of the Irish Kernes, is only one of many anecdotes, that to this day keep up a peculiar tenderness, as well as pride of feeling, in the general recollection of this great man, now five hundred years mingled with the dust.

Note IV., p. 29.—Glune-amie.

This word has been one of the torments of the lexicographers. There is no doubt that in Perthshire, and wherever the Highlanders and the Lowlanders bordered on each other, it was a common term whereby, whether in scorn or honour, the Gaelic race used to be designated. Whether the *etymon* be, as Celtic scholars say, *Gluineamach—i.e., the Gartered*—(and certainly the garter has always been a marking feature in "the Garb of old Gaul")—or, as Dr. Jamieson seems to insinuate, the word originally means *black cattle*, and had been contemptuously applied by the Sassenach to the herdsman, as on an intellectual level with his herd—I shall not pretend to say, more than that *adhuc sub judice lis est.*

Note V., p. 35.—High Street.

The two following notes are furnished by a gentleman well versed in the antiquities of bonny St. Johnston,—

"Some confusion occasionally occurs in the historical records of Perth, from there having been two high or principal streets in that city: the North High Street, still called *the* High Street, and the South High Street, now known only as the South Street, or Shoegate. An instance of this occurs in the evidence of one of the witnesses on the Gowrie Conspiracie, who deponed that the Earl of Gowrie ran in from 'the High Street;' whereas the Earl's house stood in that part of the town now known as the South Street. This circumstance will explain how the Smith had to pass St. Ann's Chapel and St. John's Church on his way from the High Street to Curfew Row, which edifices he would not have approached if his morning walk had been taken through the more northerly of the two principal streets."

Note VI., p. 35.—Curfew Street.

"Curfew Street, or Row, must, at a period not much earlier than that of the story, have formed part of the suburbs of Perth. It was the Wynd or Row immediately surrounding the Castle Yard, and had probably been built, in part at least, soon after the Castle was rased, and its moat filled up, by Robert Bruce. There is every probability that in the days of Robert the Third, it was of greater extent than at present,—the *Castle Gable*, which now terminates it to the eastward, having then run in a line with the Skinnergate, as the ruins of some walls still bear witness. The shops, as well as the houses of the Glovers, were then, as the name implies, chiefly in the Skinnergate; but the charters in possession of the incorporation show that the members had considerable property in or adjacent to the Curfew Row, consisting not only of fields and gardens, but of dwelling-houses.

"In the wall of the corner house of the Curfew Row, adjacent to Blackfriar's Vennel, there is still to be seen a niche in the wall where the Curfew bell hung. This house formed at one time a part of a chapel dedicated to St. Bartholomew, and in it at no very distant period the members of the Glover incorporation held their meetings."

Note VII., p. 59.—THE GLOVERS.

Our local antiquary says, "The Perth artisans of this craft were of great repute, and numbered amongst them, from a very early period, men of considerable substance. There are still extant among their records many charters and grants of money and lands to various religious purposes, in particular to the upholding of the altar of St. Bartholomew, one of the richest of the many shrines within the parish church of St. John.

"While alluding to these evidences of the rich possessions of the old Glovers of Perth, it ought not to pass unnoticed—as Henry pinched Simon on the subject of his rival artificers in leather, the cordwainers—that the chaplain 'aikers of St. Crispin,' on the Leonardhall property, were afterwards bought up by the Glovers.

"The avocations of this incorporation were not always of a peaceful nature. They still show a banner under which their forefathers fought in the troubles of the 17th century. It bears this inscription. '*The perfect honour of a craft, or beauty of a trade, is not in wealthe but in moral worth, whereby virtue gains renowne :*' and surmounted by the words, 'Grace and Peace,' the date 1604.

"The only other relic in the archives of this body which calls for notice in this place, is a leathern lash, called 'the whip of St. Bartholomew,' which the craft are often admonished in the records to apply to the back of refractory apprentices. It cannot have existed in the days of our friend the Glover, otherwise its frequent application to the shoulders of Conachar, would have been matter of record in the history of that family."

Note VIII., p. 78.—EAST PORT.

The following is extracted from a kind communication of the well-known antiquary, Mr. Morison of Perth,—

"The port at which the deputation for Kinfauns must have met, was a strongly fortified gate at the east end of the High Street, opening to the Bridge. On the north side of the street adjoining the gate, stood the chapel of the Virgin, from which the monks had access to the river by a flight of steps, still called 'Our Lady's Stairs.' Some remains of this chapel are yet extant, and one of the towers is in a style of architecture which most antiquaries consider peculiar to the age of Robert III. Immediately opposite, on the south side of the street, a staircase is still to be seen, evidently of great antiquity,which is said to have formed part of '*Gowrie's Palace.*' But as Gowrie House stood at the other end of the Watergate —as most of the houses of the nobility were situated *between* the staircase we now refer to and Gowrie House ; and as, singularly enough, this stair is built upon ground, which, although in the middle of the town, is not within the burgh lands, some of the local antiquaries do not hesitate to say, that it formed part of the Royal Palace, in which the Kings of Scotland resided, until they found more secluded, and probably more comfortable, lodging in the Blackfriar's Monastery. Leaving the determination of this question to those who have more leisure for solving it, thus far is certain, that the place of rendezvous for the hero of the tale and his companions was one of some consequence in the town, where their bearing was not likely to pass unobserved. The bridge to which they passed through the gate, was a very stately edifice. Major calls it, 'Pontem Sancti Joannis ingentem apud Perth.' The date of its erection is not known, but it was extensively repaired by Robert Bruce, in whose reign it suffered by the repeated sieges to which Perth was subjected, as well as by some of those inundations of the Tay to which it was frequently exposed, and one of which eventually swept it away in 1621."

Note IX., p. 228.—St. Johnston's Hunt is up.

This celebrated Slogan or War Cry was often accompanied by a stirring strain of music, which was of much repute in its day, but which has long eluded the search of musical antiquaries. It is described by the local poet, Mr. Adamson, as a great inspirer of courage.

> "Courage to give, was mightily then blown
> St. Johnston's Hunt's up, since most famous known
> By all musicians——"

Muses' Threnodie, 5th Muse.

From the description which follows, one might suppose that it had also been accompanied by a kind of war-dance.

> "O! how they bend their backs and fingers tirle!
> Moving their quivering heads, their brains do whirle
> With divers moods; and as with uncouth rapture
> Transported, so do shake their bodies' structure;
> Their eyes do reele, heads, arms, and shoulders move;
> Feet, legs, and hands, and all parts approve
> That heavenly harmonie; while as they threw
> Their browes, O mighty strain! that's brave! they shew
> Great fantasie:——"

Ibid. Id.

Note X., p. 230.—Henry Smith or Wynd.

Mr. Morrison says,—"The various designations by which Henry or Hal of the Wynd, the Gow Chrom or Bandy-legged Smith of St. Johnston, was known, have left the field open to a great variety of competitors for the honour of being reckoned among his descendants. The want of early registers, and various other circumstances, prevent our venturing to pronounce any verdict on the comparative strength of these claims, but we shall state them all fairly and briefly.

"First, we have the Henry or Hendrie families, who can produce many other instances besides their own, in which a Christian name has become that of a family or tribe, from the celebrity attached to it through the great deeds of some one of their ancestors by whom it was borne. Then follow the Hals, Halls, and Halleys, among whom even some of the ancient and honourable race of the Halkets have ranged themselves. All these claims are, however, esteemed very lightly by the Wynds, who to this day pride themselves on their thewes and sinews, and consider that their ancestor being styled "Henrie Winde" by the metrical historian of the town, is of itself proof sufficient that their claim is more solid than the name would altogether imply.

"It is rather singular that, in spite of all the ill-will which Henry seems to have borne to the Celts, and the contemptuous terms in which he so often speaks of them in the text, the Gows should be found foremost among the claimants, and that the strife should lie mainly between them and their Saxon namesakes the Smiths, families whose number, opulence, and respectability, will render it an extremely difficult matter to say which of them are in the direct line, even if it should be clearer than it is, that the children of the hero were known by their father's occupation, and not by his residence.

"It only remains to notice the pretensions of the Chroms, Crooms, Crambs, or Crombies, a name which every schoolboy will associate, if not with the athletic, at least with the gymnastic exercises for which the Gow Chrom and the grammar school at Perth were equally celebrated. We need scarcely add, that while the Saxon name corresponding with the word Gow, has brought a host of competitors into the field, there has not yet started any claimant resting his pretensions on the quality expressed in the epithet *Chrom*, *i.e.*, bandy-legged."

Note XI., p. 247.—The Council-Room.

Mr. Morrison says,—"The places where the public assemblies of the citizens, or their magistrates, were held, were so seldom changed in former times, that there seems every reason to conclude that the meetings of the town-council of Perth were always held in or near the place where they still convene. The room itself is evidently modern, but the adjoining building, which seems to have been reared close to, if it did not actually form a part of the Chapel of the Virgin, bears many marks of antiquity. The room, in which it is not improbable the council meetings were held about the period of our story, had been relieved of part of its gloomy aspect in the reign of the third James, by the addition of one of those octagonal towers which distinguish the architecture of his favourite Cochran. The upper part of it and the spire are modern, but the lower structure is a good specimen of that artist's taste.

"The power of trying criminal cases of the most serious kind, and of inflicting the highest punishment of the law, was granted by Robert III. to the magistrates of Perth, and was frequently exercised by them, as the records of the town abundantly prove."

Note XII., p. 249.—Morrice-dancers.

Considerable diversity of opinion exists respecting the introduction of the Morrice-dance into Britain. The name points it out as of Moorish origin; and so popular has this leaping kind of dancing for many centuries been in this country, that when Handel was asked to point out the peculiar taste in dancing and music of the several nations of Europe—to the French he ascribed the minuet; to the Spaniard, the saraband; to the Italian, the arietta; to the English, the hornpipe, or Morrice dance.

The local antiquary whose kindness has already been more than once acknowledged, says,—

"It adds not a little interest to such an inquiry, in connection with a story in which the fortunes of a Perth glover form so prominent a part—to find that the Glover Incorporation of Perth have preserved entire among their relics, the attire of one of the Morrice-dancers, who, on some festive occasion, exhibited his paces, 'to the jocose recreatment' of one of the Scottish monarchs, while on a visit to the Fair City.

"This curious vestment is made of fawn-coloured silk, in the form of a tunic, with trappings of green and red satin. There accompany it *two hundred and fifty-two* small circular bells, formed into twenty-one sets of twelve bells each, upon pieces of leather, made to fasten to various parts of the body. What is most remarkable about these bells, is the perfect intonation of each set, and the regular musical *intervals* between the tone of each. The twelve bells on each piece of leather are of various sizes, yet all combining to form one perfect intonation in concord with the leading note in the set. These concords are maintained not only in each set, but also in the intervals between the various pieces. The performer could thus produce, if not a *tune*, at least a pleasing and musical chime, according as he regulated with skill the movements of his body. This is sufficient evidence that the Morrice-dance was not quite so absurd and unmeaning as might at first be supposed; but that a tasteful performer could give pleasure by it to the skilful, as well as amusement to the vulgar."

Note XIII., p. 253.—Church of St. John.

"There is," says Mr. Morrison, "a simplicity in the internal architecture of the building which bespeaks a very ancient origin, and makes us suspect that the changes it has undergone have in a great measure been confined to its exterior.

Tradition ascribes its foundation to the Picts, and there is no doubt that in the age immediately subsequent to the termination of that monarchy it was famed throughout all Scotland. It is probable that the western part of it was built about that period, and the eastern not long afterwards, and in both divisions there is still to be seen a unity and beauty of design, which is done little justice to by the broken, irregular, and paltry manner in which the exterior has at various times been patched up. When the three churches into which it is now cut down were in one, the ceilings high and decorated, the aisles enriched by the offerings of the devotees to the various altars which were reared around it, and the arches free from the galleries which now deform all these Gothic buildings,—it must have formed a splendid theatre for such a spectacle as that of the trial by bier-right."

Note XIV., p. 287.—Ordeal by Fire.

In a volume of miscellanies published in Edinburgh in 1825, under the name of *Janus*, there is included a very curious paper illustrative of the solemnity with which the Catholic Church in the dark ages superintended the appeal to heaven by the ordeal of *fire;* and as the ceremonial on occasions such as that in the text was probably much the same as what is there described, an extract may interest the reader.

"Church-Service for the Ordeal by Fire.

"We are all well aware that the ordeal by fire had, during many centuries, the sanction of the church, and moreover, that, considering in what hands the knowledge of those times lay, this blasphemous horror could never have existed without the connivance, and even actual co-operation, of the priesthood.

"It is only a few years ago, however, that any actual form of ritual, set apart by ecclesiastical authority for this atrocious ceremony of fraud, has been recovered. Mr. Büsching, the well-known German antiquary, has the merit of having discovered a most extraordinary document of this kind in the course of examining the charter-chest of an ancient Thuringian monastery; and he has published it in a periodical work, entitled, '*Die Vorzeit*,' in 1817. We shall translate the *prayers*, as given in that work, as literally as possible. To those who suspected no deceit, there can be no doubt this service must have been as awfully impressive as any that is to be found in the formularies of any church; but words are wanting to express the abject guilt of those who, well knowing the base trickery of the whole matter, who, having themselves assisted in preparing all the appliances of legerdemain behind the scenes of the sanctuary-stage, dared to clothe their iniquity in the most solemn phraseology of religion.

"A fire was kindled within the church, not far from the great altar. The person about to undergo the ordeal was placed in front of the fire surrounded by his friends, by all who were in any way interested in the result of the trial, and by the whole clergy of the vicinity. Upon a table near the fire, the coulter over which he was to walk, the bar he was to carry, or, if he were a knight, the steel-gloves which, after they had been made red-hot, he was to put on his hands, were placed in view of all.

"Part of the usual service of the day being performed, a priest advances, and places himself in front of the fire, uttering, at the same moment, the following prayer, which is the first Mr. Büsching gives,—

"'O Lord God, bless this place, that herein there may be health, and holiness, and purity, and sanctification, and victory, and humility, and meekness, fulfilment of the law, and obedience to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. May thy blessing, O God of purity and justice, be upon this place, and upon all that be therein; for the sake of Christ, the Redeemer of the world.'

"A second priest now lifts the iron, and bears it towards the fire. A series of prayers follows; all to be repeated ere the iron is laid on the fire.

" *These are the Prayers to be said over the Fire and the Iron.*

"'1. Lord God, Almighty Father, Fountain of Light, hear us :—enlighten us O Thou that dwellest in light unapproachable. Bless this fire, O God ; and as from the midst of the fire Thou didst of old enlighten Moses, so from this flame enlighten and purify our hearts, that we may be worthy, through Christ our Lord, to come unto Thee, and unto the life eternal.

"'2. Our Father which art in Heaven, etc.

"'3. O Lord, save Thy servant. Lord God, send him help out of Zion, Thy holy hill. Save him, O Lord. Hear us, O Lord. O Lord, be with us.

"'4. O God, Holy and Almighty, hear us. By the majesty of Thy most holy name, and by the coming of Thy dear Son, and by the gift of the comfort of Thy Holy Spirit, and by the justice of Thine eternal seat, hear us good Lord. Purify this metal, and sanctify it, that all falsehood and deceit of the devil may be cast out of it, and utterly removed ; and that the truth of Thy righteous judgment may be opened and made manifest to all the faithful that cry unto Thee this day, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.'

" The iron is now placed in the fire, and sprinkled with consecrated water, both before and after it is so placed. The mass is said while the iron is heating,—the introductory scripture being,—'O Lord, Thou art just, and righteous are all Thy judgments.' The priest delivers the wafer to the person about to be tried, and, ere he communicates, the following prayer is said by the priest and congregation,—

"'We pray unto Thee, O God, that it may please Thee to absolve this Thy servant, and to clear him from his sins. Purify him, O heavenly Father, from all the stains of the flesh, and enable him, by Thy all-covering and atoning grace, to pass through this fire,—Thy creature—triumphantly, being justified in Christ our Lord.'

" Then the Gospel,—'Then there came one unto Jesus, who fell upon his knees, and cried out, Good Master, what must I do that I may be saved ? Jesus said, Why callest thou Me good ?' etc.

" The chief priest, from the altar, now addresses the accused, who is still kneeling near the fire,—

"'By the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and by the Christianity whose name thou bearest, and by the baptism in which thou wert born again, and by all the blessed relics of the saints of God that are preserved in this church, I conjure thee, Come not unto this altar, nor eat of this body of Christ, if thou beest guilty in the things that are laid to thy charge ; but if thou beest innocent therein, come, brother, and come freely.'

" The accused then comes forward and communicates,—the priest saying,—'This day may the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which were given and shed for thee, be thy protection and thy succour, yea, even in the midst of the flame.'

" The priest now reads this prayer,—'O Lord, it hath pleased Thee to accept our spiritual sacrifice. May the joyful partaking in this holy sacrament be comfortable and useful to all that are here present, and serviceable to the removing of the bondage and thraldom of whatsoever sins do most easily beset us. Grant also, that to this Thy servant it may be of exceeding comfort, gladdening his heart, until the truth of Thy righteous judgment be revealed.'

" The organ now peals, and *Kyrie Eleeison* and the Litany are sung in full chorus.

" After this comes another prayer,—

"'O God ! Thou that through fire hast shown forth so many signs of Thy almighty power ! Thou that didst snatch Abraham, Thy servant, out of the brands and flames of the Chaldeans, wherein many were consumed ! Thou that didst cause the bush to burn before the eyes of Moses, and yet not to be consumed ! God, that didst send Thy Holy Spirit in the likeness of tongues of fiery flame, to the end that

Thy faithful servants might be visited and set apart from the unbelieving generation ; God, that didst safely conduct the three children through the flame of the Babylonians ; God, that didst waste Sodom with fire from heaven, and preserve Lot, Thy servant, as a sign and a token of Thy mercy : O God, show forth yet once again Thy visible power, and the majesty of thy unerring judgment that truth may be made manifest, and falsehood avenged, make Thou this fire Thy minister before us ; powerless be it where is the power of purity, but sorely burning, even to the flesh and the sinews, the hand that hath done evil, and that hath not feared to be lifted up in false swearing. O God ! from whose eye nothing can be concealed, make Thou this fire Thy voice to us Thy servants, that it may reveal innocence, or cover iniquity with shame. Judge of all the earth ! hear us . hear us, good Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ Thy Son.'

"The priest now dashes once more the holy water over the fire. saying, 'Upon this fire be the blessing of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that it may be a sign to us of the righteous judgment of God.'

"The priest pauses ; instantly the accused approaches to the fire, and lifts the iron, which he carries nine yards from the flame. The moment he lays it down he is surrounded by the priests, and borne by them into the vestry ; there his hands are wrapped in linen cloths, sealed down with the signet of the church : these are removed on the third day, when he is declared innocent or guilty, according to the condition in which his hands are found. '*Si sinus rubescens in vestigio ferri reperiatur, culpabilis ducatur. Sin autem mundus reperiatur, Laus Deo referatur.*'

"Such is certainly one of the most extraordinary records of the craft, the audacity, and the weakness of mankind."

The belief that the corpse of a murdered person would bleed on the touch, or at the approach, of the murderer, was universal among the northern nations. We find it seriously urged in the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh, so late as 1688, as an evidence of guilt. The case was that of Philip Standsfield, accused of the murder of his father, and this part of the evidence against him is thus stated in the "libel," or indictment. "And when his father's dead body was sighted and inspected by chirurgeons, and the clear and evident signs of the murder had appeared, the body was sewed up, and most carefully cleaned, and his nearest relations and friends were desired to lift his body to the coffin ; and accordingly, James Row, merchand (who was in Edinburgh in the time of the murder), having lifted the left side of Sir James his head and shoulder, and the said Philip the right side, his father's body, though carefully cleaned, as said is, so as the least blood was not on it, did (according to God's usual method of discovering murders) blood afresh upon him, and defiled all his hands, which struck him with such a terror, that he immediately let his father's head and body fall with violence, and fled from the body, and in consternation and confusion cried, 'Lord, have mercy upon me !' and bowed himself down over a seat in the church (where the corp were inspected), wiping his father's innocent blood off his own murdering hands upon his cloaths." To this his counsel replied, that "this is but a superstitious observation, without any ground either in law or reason ; and Carpzovius relates that several persons upon that ground had been unjustly challenged." It was, however, insisted on as a link in the chain of evidence, not as a merely singular circumstance, but as a miraculous interposition of Providence ; and it was thus animadverted upon by Sir George Mackenzie, the king's counsel, in his charge to the jury. "But they, fully persuaded that Sir James was murdered by his own son, sent out some chirurgeons and friends, who, having raised the body, did see it bleed miraculously upon his touching it. In which God Almighty Himself was pleased to bear a share in the testimonies we produce ; that Divine power, which makes the blood circulate during life, has oft times, in all nations, opened a passage to it after death upon such occasions, but most in this case."

Note XV., p. 289.—Skinners' Yards.

"The Skinners' Yard," says Mr. Morrison, "is still in the possession of that fraternity, and is applied to the purpose which its name implies. Prior to the time of the peaceable Robert, it was the court-yard of the castle. Part of the gate which opened from the town, to the drawbridge of the castle, is still to be seen, as well as some traces of the foundation of the Keep or Donjon, and of the towers which surrounded the Castle-yard. The Curfew-row, which now encloses the Skinners'-yard, at that time formed the avenue or street leading from the northern part of the town to the Dominican Monastery."

Note XVI., p. 295.—Earl of Errol's Lodgings.

"The Constable's, or Earl of Errol's, lodgings," says Mr. Morrison, "stood near the south end of the Watergate, the quarter of the town in which most of the houses of the nobility were placed, amidst gardens which extended to the wall of the city adjoining the river. The families of the Hays had many rich possessions in the neighbourhood, and other residences in the town besides that commonly known as the Constable's Lodgings. Some of these subsequently passed, along with a considerable portion of the Carse, to the Ruthven or Gowrie family. The last of those noble residences in Perth which retained any part of its former magnificence (and on that account styled the Palace), was the celebrated Gowrie House, which was nearly entire in 1805, but of which not a vestige now remains. On the confiscation of the Gowrie estates, it merged into the public property of the town; and, in 1746, was presented by the magistrates to the Duke of Cumberland. His Royal Highness, on receiving this mark of the attachment or servility of the Perth rulers, asked, with sarcastic nonchalance, 'If the *piece of ground* called the Carse of Gowrie went along with it?'"

Note XVII., p. 337.

The security no less than the beauty of the situations led to the choice of these lake islands for religious establishments. Those in the Highlands were generally of a lowly character, and in many of them the monastic orders were tolerated, and the rites of the Romish Church observed, long after the Reformation had swept both "the rooks and their nests" out of the lowlands. The Prior on Loch Tay was founded by Alexander I., and the care of it committed to a small body of monks; but the last residents in it were three nuns, who, when they did emerge into society, seemed determined to enjoy it in its most complicated and noisy state, for they came out only once a year, and that to *a market* at Kenmore. Hence that Fair is still called "Fiell na m'hau maomb," or Holy Woman's market.

Note XVIII., p. 339.

The installation, the marriage, and the funeral of a chieftain, were the three periods of his course observed with the highest ceremony by all the clan. The latter was perhaps the most imposing of the three spectacles, from the solemnity of the occasion, and the thrilling effect produced by the coronach, sung by hundreds of voices, its melancholy notes undulating through the valleys, or reverberating among the hills. All these observances are fading away, and the occasional attempt at a gathering, for the funeral of a chief, now resembles the dying note of the coronach, faintly echoed for the last time among the rocks.

Note XIX., p. 410.—Red-hand.

Mr. Morrison says, "The case of a person taken *red-hand* by the magistrates of Perth and immediately executed, was the main cause of the power of trying cases of life and death being taken from them and from all subordinate judicatories. A

young English officer connected with some families of rank and influence, who was stationed with a recruiting party at Perth, had become enamoured of a lady there, so young as still to be under the tuition of a dancing-master. Her admirer was in the habit of following her into the school, to the great annoyance of the teacher, who, on occasion of a ball given in his class-room in the Kirkgate, stationed himself at the door, determined to resist the entrance of the officer, on account of the scandal to which his visits had given rise. The officer came as a matter of course, and a scuffle ensued, which at last bore so threatening an aspect, that the poor dancing-master fled through the passage, or *close*, as it is called, by which there was access to the street. He was pursued by the officer with his drawn sword, and was run through the body ere he could reach the street, where the crowd usually assembled on such occasions might have protected him. The officer was instantly apprehended, and executed, it is understood, even without any form of trial; at least there is no notice of it in any of the records where it would with most probability have been entered. But the sword is still in the possession of a gentleman whose ancestors held official situations in the town at the time, and the circumstances of the murder and of the execution have been handed down with great minuteness and apparent truth of description from father to son. It was immediately afterwards that the power of the civic magistrates in matters criminal was abridged,—it is thought chiefly through the influence of the friends of this young officer."

Note XX., p. 419.—Ploughman Stares.

"This place, twice referred to in the course of our story as hateful to the Highlanders, lies near the *Stare-dam*, a collection of waters in a very desolate hollow between the hill of Birnam, and the road from Perth to Dunkeld. The *eerieness* of the place is indescribable, and is rendered yet more striking from its being within a furlong of one of the loveliest and richest scenes in Scotland—the north-west opening of Strathmore. The "dam" has been nearly drained within these few years, but the miserable patches of sickly corn which have with vast labour and cost been obtained, look still more melancholy than the solitary tarn which the barren earth seems to have drunk up. The whole aspect of the place fitted it for being the scene of the trial and punishment of one of the most notorious bands of thieves and outlaws that ever laid the Low Country under contribution. Ruthven, the sheriff, is said to have held his court on a rising ground to the north, still called the Court-hill; and there were lately, or there still may be, at the east end of the Roch-in-roy wood, some oaks on which the Highlanders were hung, and which long went by the name of the Hanged-men's-trees. The hideous appearance of the bodies hanging in chains gave the place a name which to this day grates on the ear of a Celt."—Morrison.

Note XXI., p. 423.—Gardens of the Dominicans.

"The gardens of the Dominicans surrounded the monastery on all sides, and were of great extent and beauty. Part of them immediately adjoined the North Inch, and covered all that space of ground now occupied by Atholl Place, the Crescent, and Rose Terrace, besides a considerable extent of ground to the west and south, still known by the name of the Black Friars. On a part of these grounds overlooking the North Inch, probably near the south end of the Terrace, a richly decorated summer-house stood, which is frequently mentioned in old writings as the Gilten Arbour. From the balconies of this edifice King Robert is supposed to have witnessed the conflict of the clans. What the peculiar forms, construction, or ornaments of this building were, which gained for it this title, is not even hinted at by any of the local chroniclers. It may be mentioned, however, although it is a matter of mere tradition, that the ornaments on the ceiling of the Monks' Tower (a circular watch-tower at the south-east angle of the town) were said to have been

copied from those on the Gilten Arbour, by orders of the first Earl of Gowrie, at the corner of whose garden the Monks' Tower stood. This tower was taken down at the same time with Gowrie House, and many yet remember the general appearance of the paintings on the ceiling, yet it does not seem to have occurred to any one to have had them copied. They were allegorical and astronomical, representing the virtues and vices, the seasons, the zodiac, and other subjects commonplace enough; yet even the surmise that they might have been copied from others still more ancient, if it could not save them from destruction, should have entitled them to a greater share than they seemed to have possessed of the notice of their contemporaries. The patience with which the antiquaries of Perth have submitted to the removal (in many cases the wanton and useless removal) of the historical monuments with which they were at one time surrounded, is truly wonderful!"—MORRISON.

Note XXII., p. 447.

The reader may be amused with the account of this onslaught in Boece, as translated by Bellenden.

"At this time, mekil of all the north of Scotland was hevely trublit be two clannis of Irsmen, namit Clankayis and Glenquhattanis; invading the cuntre, be thair weris, with ithand slauchter and reif. At last, it was appointit betwix the heidis-men of thir two clannis, be avise of the Erlis of Murray and Crawfurd, that xxx of the principall men of the ta clan sal cum, with othir xxx of the tothir clan, arrayit in thair best avise; and sall convene afore the king at Perth, for decision of al pleis; and fecht with scharp swerdis to the deith, but ony harnes; and that clan quhare the victory succedit, to have perpetuall empire above the tothir. Baith thir clannis, glaid of this condition, come to the North Inche, beside Perth, with jugis set in scaffaldis, to discus the verite. Ane of thir clannis wantit ane man to perfurnis furth the nowmer, and wagit ane carll, for money, to debait thair actioun, howbeit this man pertenit na thing to thaim in blud nor kindnes Thir two clannis stude arrayit with gret hatrent aganis othir; and, be sound of trumpet, ruschit togidder; takand na respect to thair woundis, sa that thay micht distroy thair ennimes: and faucht in this maner lang, with uncertane victory: quhen ane fel, ane othir was put in his rowme. At last, the Clankayis war al slane except ane, that swam throw the watter of Tay. Of Glenquhattannis, was left xi personis on live; bot thay war sa hurt, that thay micht nocht hald thair swerdis in thair handis. This debait was fra the incarnation, MCCCXCVI yeiris.

Note XXIII., p. 452.

The death of the Duke of Rothsay is not accompanied with the circumstances detailed by later writers in Wyntoun. The Chronicler of Lochleven says simply:—

"A thousand foure hundyr yeris and twa,
All before as ye herd done,
Our lord the kingis eldest sone,
Suete and vertuous, yong and fair,
And his nerast lauchful ayr,
Honest, habil, and avenand,
Our Lorde, our Prynce, in all plesand,
Cunnand into letterature,
A seymly persone in stature,
Schir Davy Duke of Rothesay,
Of Marche the sevyn and twenty day
Yauld his Saule til his Creatoure,
His corse til hallowit Sepulture.
In Lundoris his Body lies,
His Spirite intil Paradys."—B. ix. chap. 23.

The Continuator of Fordun is far more particular, and though he does not positively pronounce on the guilt of Albany, says enough to show that, when he wrote, the suspicion against him was universal; and that Sir John Ramorny was generally considered as having followed the dark and double course ascribed to him in the novel.

"Anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo primo, obiit columna ecclesiæ robustissima, vas eloquentiæ, thesaurus scientiæ, ac defensor catholicæ fidei, dominus Walterus Treyl episcopus S. Andreæ; et etiam domina Anabella regina apud Sconam decessit, et sepulta est in Dunfermelyn. Hi enim duo, dum viverent, honorem quasi regni exaltabant; videlicet, principes et magnates in discordiam concitatos ad concordiam revocantes, alienigenas et extraneos egregiè susceptantes et conviviantes, ac munificè dimissos lætificantes. Unde quasi proverbialiter tunc dictum exstitit, quòd mortuis reginâ Scotiæ, comite de Douglas, et episcopo Sancti Andreæ, abiit decus, recessit honor, et honestas obiit Scotiæ. Eodem anno quarta mortalitas exstitit in regno. Paulo ante dominus rex in consilio deputavit certos consiliarios valentes barones et milites, juratos ad regendum et consiliandum dominum David Stewart ducem Rothsaiensem, comitem de Carrik, et principem regni, quia videbatur regi et consilio quòd immiscebat se sæpiùs effrænatis lusibus et levioribus ludicris. Propter quod et ipse consilio astrictus sanior i, juravit se regimini eorum et consilio conformare. Sed mortuâ reginâ ipsius nobili matre, quæ eum in multis refrænabat, tanquam laqueus contritus fuisset, speravit se liber atum, et, spreto proborum consilio, denuo in priori levitate se totum dedit. Propter quod consilium procerum sibi assignatum quitabit se regi, et si voluisset, non tamen posse se eum ad gravitatem morum flexisse attestatur. Unde rex impotens et decrepitus scripsit fratri suo duci Albaniæ, gubernatori regni, ut arrestaretur, et ad tempus custodiæ deputaretur, donec virgâ disciplinæ castigatus, seipsum meliùs cognosceret. Non enim osculatur filium pater, sed aliquando castigat. Sed quod rex proposuit ad filii emendam, tendit ei ad noxam. Nam uterque bajulus literæ regalis ad gubernatorem de facto ostendit, se incentorem et instigatorem regi ut taliter demandaret, quod honori alterius obviaret, sicut experientiâ exitus rei patefecit. Domini enim Willelmus Lindesay de Rossy et Johannes Remorgeney milites, regis familiares et consiliarii, nuncii et portatores erant literarum regis gubernatori: quique etiam, ut dicitur, duci Rothsaiensi priùs suggesserunt, ut, post obitum episcopi Sancti Andreæ, castrum suum ad usum regis, quousque novus episcopus institueretur, reciperet et servaret: quique ipsum ducem, nihil mali præmeditatum, ad castrum Sancti Andreæ simpliciter, et cum moderata familia, equitantem, inter villam de Nidi et Stratyrum arrestaverunt, et per potentiam eundem ducem ad ipsum castrum Sancti Andreæ, sibi ad deliberandum paratum, induxerunt, et ibidem in custodia tenuerunt, quousque dux Albaniæ cum suo consilio apud Culros tento, quid de eo facerent, deliberaverunt. Qui quidem dux Albaniæ, cum domino Archibaldo II. comite de Douglas, manu validâ ipsum ad turrim de Faulkland, jumento impositum et russeto collobio chlamidatum transvexerunt: ubi in quadam honesta camerula eum servandum deputaverunt. In qua tam diu custoditus, scilicet per Johannem Selkirk et Johannem Wrycht, donec dyssenteriâ, sive, ut alii volunt, fame tabefactus, finem vitæ dedit vij. Kal. Aprilis, in vigilia Paschæ, serò, sive in die Paschæ summo mane, et sepultus est in Londoris. Præmissus verò Johannes Remorgeney tam principi, quàm domino regi, erat consiliarius, audax spiritu, et pronunciatione eloquentissimus, ac in arduis causis prolocutor regis, et causidicus disertissimus: qui, ut dicitur, ante hæc suggessit ipsi principi duci Rothsaiensi, ut patruum suum ducem Albaniæ arrestaret, et, qualicunque occasione nactâ, statim de medio tolleret: quod facere omnino princeps refutavit. Istud attendens miles, malitiæ suæ fuligine occæcatus, à cœptis desistere nequivit, hujusmodi labe attachiatus; quia, ut ait Chrysostomus, 'Coërceri omnino nequit animus pravâ semel voluntate vitiatus.' Et ideo, vice versâ, pallium in alterum humerum convertens, hoc idem maleficium ducem Albaniæ de nepote suo duce Rothsaiensi facere instruxit; aliàs

fine fallo, ut asseruit, dux Rothsaiensis de ipso finem facturus fuisset. Dictus insuper D. Willelmus Lindesay cum ipso Johanne Remorgeney in eandem sententiam fortè consentivit, pro eo quòd dictus dux Rothsaiensis sororem ipsius D. Willelmi Euphemiam de Lindesay affidavit, sed per sequentia aliarum matrimonia attemptata, sicut et filiam comitis Marchiæ, sic eandem repudiavit. Ipse enim, ut æstimo, est ille David, de quo vates de Breclyngton sic vaticinatus est, dicens;

> Psalletur gestis David luxuria festis,
> Quòd tenet uxores uxore suâ meliores,
> Deficient mores regales, perdet honores.

Paulo ante captionem suam apparuit mirabilis cometes, emittens ex se radios crinitos ad Aquilonem tendentes. Ad quam visendum, cùm primò appareret, quodam vespere in castro de Edinburgh cum aliis ipse dux secedens, fertur ipsum sic de stella disseruisse, dicens; 'Ut à mathematicis audivi, hujusmodi cometes, cùm apparet, signat mortem vel mutationem alicujus principis, vel alicujus patriæ destructionem.' Et sic evenit ut prædixit. Nam, duce capto, statim in præjacentem materiam, sicut Deus voluit, redit stella. In hoc potuit iste dux Sibyllæ prophetissæ comparari, de qua sic loquitur Claudianus:

> "Miror, cur aliis quæ fata pandere soles,
> Ad propriam cladem cæca Sibylla taces."

The narrative of Boece attaches murder distinctly to Albany. After mentioning the death of Queen Annabella Drummond, he thus proceeds:—

"Be quhais deith, succedit gret displeseir to hir son, David, Duk of Rothesay: for, during hir life, he wes haldin in virtews and honest occupatioun: eftir hir deith, he began to rage in all maner of insolence; and fulyeit virginis, matronis, and nunnis, be his unbridillit lust. At last, King Robert, informit of his young and insolent maneris, send letteris to his brothir, the Duke of Albany, to intertene his said son, the Duk of Rothesay, and to leir him honest and civill maneris. The Duk of Albany, glaid of thir writtingis, tuk the Duk of Rothesay betwix Dunde and Sanct Androis, and brocht him to Falkland, and inclusit him in the tour thairof, but ony meit or drink. It it said, ane woman, havand commiseratioun on this Duk, leit meill fall doun throw the loftis of the toure: be quhilkis, his life wes certane dayis savit. This woman, fra it wes knawin, wes put to deith. On the same maner, ane othir woman gaif him milk of hir paup, throw ane lang reid; and wes slane with gret cruelte, fra it wes knawin. Than wes the Duke destitute of all mortall supplie; and brocht, finalie, to sa miserable and hungry appetite, that he eit, nocht allanerlie the filth of the toure quhare he wes, bot his awin fingaris: to his gret marterdome. His body wes beryit in Lundoris, and kithit miraklis mony yeris eftir; quhil, at last, King James the First began to punis his slayaris; and fra that time furth, the miraclis ceissit."

The *Remission*, which Albany and Douglas afterwards received at the hands of Robert III., was first printed by Lord Hailes; and is as follows:—

"Robertus, Dei gratiâ, Rex Scottorum, Universis, ad quorum notitiam præsentes literæ pervenerint, Salutem in Domino sempiternam: Cum nuper carissimi nobis, Robertus Albaniæ Dux, Comes de Fife et de Menteth, frater noster germanus, et Archibaldus Comes de Douglass, et Dominus Galwidiæ, filius noster secundum legem, ratione filiæ nostræ quam duxit in uxorem, præcarissimum filium nostrum primogenitum David, quondam Ducem Rothsaye ac Comitem de Carrick et Atholiæ, capi fecerunt, et personaliter arrestari, et in castro Sancti Andreæ primo custodiri, deindeque apud Faucland in custodia detineri, ubi ab hac luce, divinâ providentiâ, et non aliter, migrasse dignoscitur. Quibus comparentibus coram nobis, in concilio nostro generali apud Edinburgh, decimo sexto die mensis Maii, anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo secundo, inchoato, et nonnullis diebus continuato, et super hoc interrogatis ex officio nostro regali, sive accusatis hujusmodi captionem, arrestationem mortem, ut superius est expressum, confitentes, causas ipsos ad hoc moventes, pro publica, ut asseruerunt, utilitate

arctantes, in præsentia nostra assignârunt, quas non duximus præsentibus inserendas, et ex causâ: Habitâ deinde super hoc diligenti inquisitione, consideratis omnibus et singulis in hac parte considerandis, hujusmodi causam tangentibus, et maturâ deliberatione concilii nostri præhabitâ discussis, prænotatos Robertum fratrem nostrum germanum, Archibaldumque filium nostrum secundum jura, et eorum in hac parte participes quoscunque, viz., arrestatores, detentores, custodes, consiliarios, et omnes alios consilium, videlicet, auxilium, vel favorem eisdem præstantes, sive eorum jussum aut mandatum qualitercunque exsequentes, excusatos habemus; necnon et ipsos, et eorum quemlibet, a crimine læsæ majestatis nostræ, vel alio quocunque crimine, culpa, injuria, rancore, et offensa, quæ eis occasione præmissorum imputari possent qualitercunque, in dicto consilio nostro palam et publicè declaravimus, pronunciavimus, et diffinivimus, tenoreque præsentium declaramus, pronunciamus, et per hanc diffinitivam nostram sententiam diffinimus, innocentes, innoxios, inculpabiles, quietos, liberos, et immunes, penitus et omnimodo: Et si quam contra ipsos, sive eorum aliquem, aut aliquam vel aliquos, in hoc facto qualitercunque participes, vel eis quomodolibet adhærentes, indignationem, iram, rancorem, vel offensionem, concepimus qaulitercunque, illos proprio motu, ex certa scientia, et etiam ex deliberatione concilii nostri jam dicti, annullamus, removemus, et adnullatos volumus haberi, in perpetuum. Quare omnibus et singulis subditis nostris, cujuscunque statûs aut conditionis exstiterint, districtè præcipimus et mandamus, quatenus sæpe dictis Roberto et Archibaldo, eorumque in hoc facto participibus, consentientibus, seu adhærentibus, ut præmittitur, verbo non detrahent, neque facto, nec contra eosdem murmurent qualitercunque, unde possit eorum bona fama lædi, vel aliquod præjudicium generari, sub omni pœna quæ exinde competere poterit, quomodolibet ipso jure. Datum, sub testimonio magni sigilli nostri, in monasterio Sanctæ Crucis de Edinburgh, vicesimo die mensis Maii prædicti, anno Domini millesimo quadringentesimo secundo, et regni nostri anno tertio decimo."

Lord Hailes sums up his comment on the document with words which, as Pinkerton says, leave no doubt that he considered the prince as having been murdered: viz. "The Duke of Albany and the Earl of Douglas obtained a remission in terms as ample as if they had actually murdered the heir apparent."